

4x4

A U S T R A L I A

**RANGER
SUPER DUTY
REVEALED**

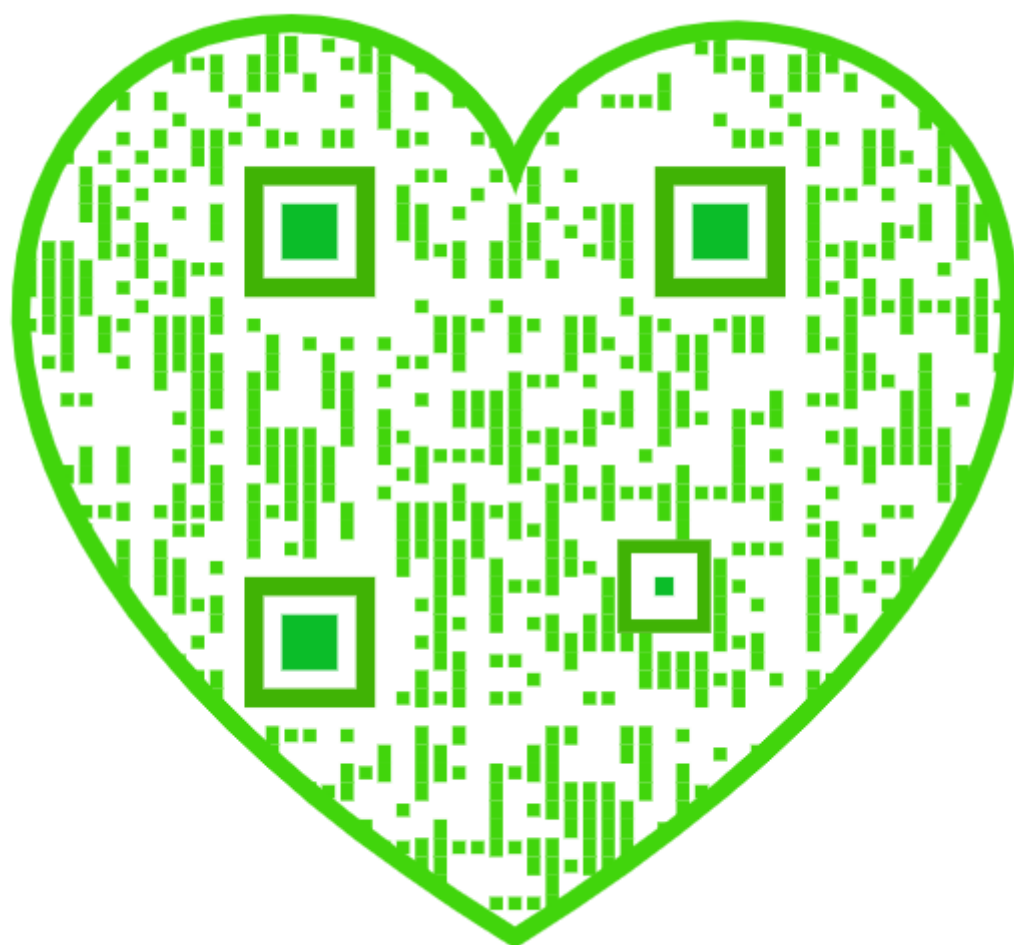


PIMP MY PRADO

ALTITUDE WITH ATTITUDE
+ BYD SHARK & RAM HURRICANE 16 TESTED



MAY 2025
ISSUE NO. 503
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4X4
AUSTRALIA

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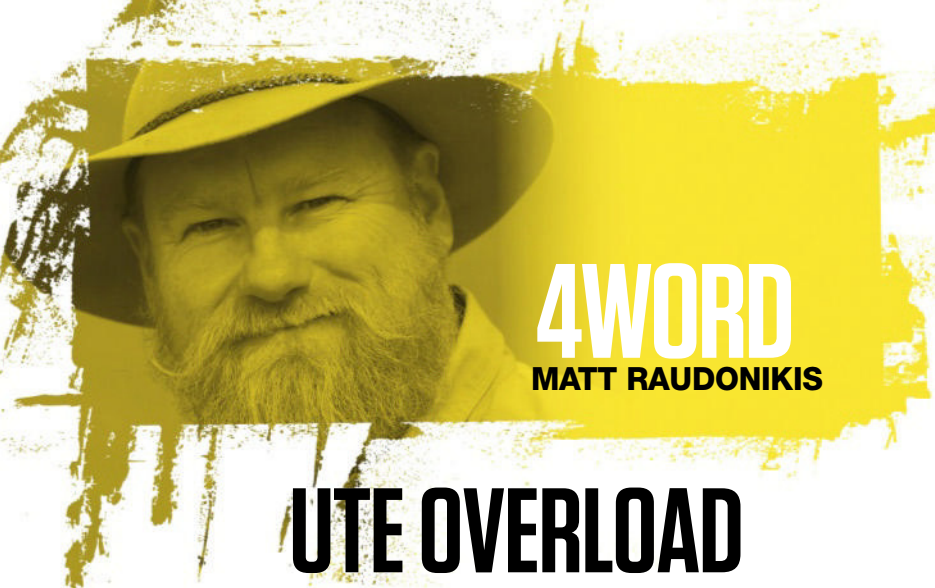
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4WORD MATT RAUDONIKIS

UTE OVERLOAD

Utes continue to be the big-ticket new vehicles in Australia with Ranger and HiLux maintaining their leadership of the new-vehicle market, only challenged by the RAV4 – go figure!

New utes continue to launch in Australia with the full-size American pickups now having a stronghold in this country, while an influx of new brands continue to flood in from Asia.

The biggest agitator to the ute market so far in 2025 has been the BYD Shark, which has sold close to 5000 units in Australia to date after only going on sale in February. It's outselling market mainstays like the Mitsubishi Triton, Nissan Navara and Isuzu D-MAX, and with good reason. For a start, there's the \$57,900 price tag which many buyers will find appealing, but they are really sold on the Shark once they get in and drive it.

The Shark's interior is more premium and better equipped than most of the popular top-spec utes on the market, and its on-road performance manners are also top notch.

I've spent a bit of time in a couple of Sharks recently; one a test vehicle which I review in this issue, and the

other one we have purchased and will be kitting up over the coming months to find its potential. As I say in the review, the Shark is a great first effort from BYD but there's still room for improvement, so we await to see what is next from the brand.

At the heavy-duty end of the ute market, Ford has shown off its Ranger Super Duty, which promises to shake up not only the ute market but also the GVM-upgrade business. With an 8000kg GCM, a 4500kg GVM and a 4500kg towing capacity, the Ranger HD will be a unique offering when it goes on sale next year. And how good does that green prototype SD look?!

I also tested the new Hurricane inline-six powered Ram 1500 for this issue and came away impressed with its performance over the outgoing V8 model, as well as Ram's competition here in Australia. The launch also gave us a sneak peak of what the Ram 2500 and 3500 HD models will deliver when they land here later in the year – 1400Nm, anyone?

Love them or hate them, 4x4 utes are not going away and you'll only be seeing more of them on the tracks of Australia.

Matt



4X4
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"4x4s, the places you can take them, and the gear to get you there"

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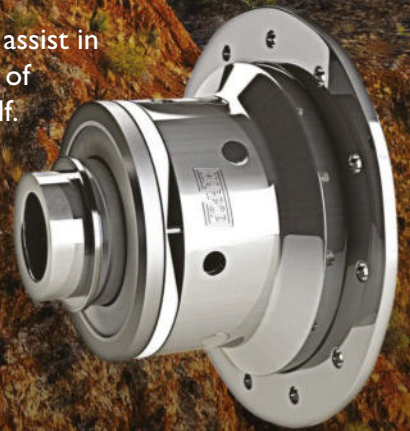


The Terrain Tamer ELocker Kit is designed specifically to assist in the fitment of the Harrop Eaton ELocker, consisting of all of the bearings and gaskets required, as well as the unit itself.

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4CAST

NEWS AND VIEWS

RAM TORQUES UP



**NEW RAM HD MODELS DUE LATER THIS YEAR
CHURNING OUT UP TO 1457NM!**

WHILE most of the news was about the Ram 1500 and its new inline six-cylinder Hurricane engine back in March, the Ram Trucks Australia (RTA) team also confirmed that we'll be getting updated and uprated 2500 and 3500 Heavy Duty trucks before the year is out. They wouldn't elaborate on the changes to the HD models, but a look at the recently released Ram HDs in the USA should give us a pretty good indication.

Leading the changes is an updated version of the iconic Cummins 6.7-litre inline-six diesel engine that now makes 317kW and a stonking 1457Nm – enough to haul your country ranch from one state to the next!

The new diesel engine features a redesigned block and head, heavy-duty pistons, new performance intake manifold, a new turbo, larger intake/exhaust valves for improved port flow, and a higher-pressure fuel system enhance the

diesel's hallmark durability and efficiency.

Available in both the Ram 2500 and 3500 models, the uprated engine is backed by a TorqueFlite HD eight-speed automatic transmission that features taller gearing for lower revs when cruising and improved performance and efficiency. The Ram is also offered with a 6.4-litre Hemi V8 in the USA but we don't expect that the petrol engine to be offered here in Australia where diesel is king for heavy-duty hauling.

The current Ram 2500 is rated to tow a 4500kg trailer in Australia, while the 3500 can be set up to haul up to 8000kg with the right equipment.

Trailer reverse steering control has a dial just below the centre multimedia screen, which allows the driver to enter a few measurements before the camera tracks the trailer position and the driver is backing up and guiding the trailer. The driver simply rotates the dial left or right in the direction they want the trailer to go while the system controls the steering wheel. This is similar to the system Ford

offers here in F-150 and some Ranger variants.

Trailer-Tow Pages gives owners the ability to view comprehensive trailer monitoring information, including Trailer Light Check-out, trailer tyre-pressure monitoring, Trailer Brake Status and auxiliary camera shortcuts, all in one application accessible through the Uconnect touchscreen.

Interior updates include a new 14.5-inch reconfigurable multimedia touchscreen as well as a 10.5-inch screen for the front-seat passenger as fitted to the MY25 1500-class vehicles.

Externally there are revisions to the grille and front end including new LED headlights.

The HD Rams sold by RTA currently sell for \$172,950 (2500) and \$177,950 (3500) +ORC and we can expect price increases, but by how much is unknown at this point. The current Ram 3500 has already sold out and stocks of 2500 are getting low as we await the arrival of the 2025 updated models. **4x4**

HERCULEAN

The incoming Ram 2500 HD is rated to tow 4500kg, its 3500 sibling up to 8000kg.



HMM?

Having second thoughts about your new 4x4 purchase? If it's an Ineos, no worries, the company says it can buy it back.



INEOS REVEALS REFUND OFFER

INEOS' 'LOVE IT OR LEAVE IT' CAMPAIGN ALLOWS OWNERS TO RETURN THEIR VEHICLE DOESN'T MEET THEIR EXPECTATIONS

NEOS has unveiled a bold offer to entice consumers to sign on the dotted line for an all-new Quartermaster double-cab ute or cab-chassis.

The 'Love It or Leave It' offer essentially allows new owners the opportunity to return their brand-new Quartermaster if it doesn't meet their expectations and receive a refund. It's a striking move, highlighting the brand's confidence in its product – but also consumer hesitation when looking outside of the trusted brands.

If the offer is activated, Ineos will repurchase the vehicle from customers within a six-month period, subject to vehicle condition and usage terms and conditions.

"As a scale-up brand we recognise that

we're combatting brand awareness and trust, to an almost David versus Goliath extent with engrained industry giants who have become a default choice, particularly in regional Australia," said Justin Hocevar, head of region at Ineos Automotive Asia Pacific.

"Our 'Love It or Leave It' offer embodies not only our unwavering confidence in Quartermaster and the Grenadier vision, but it also demonstrates our steadfast commitment to building trust in our customers.

"By their nature, 4x4 enthusiasts like to challenge the status quo, yet for too long they've clicked their heels without the opportunity to own a vehicle that is built exactly for their specialised 4x4 interests. The Quartermaster is

that vehicle.

"So, before opting for the default, we're daring Aussies to do their research and put the Quartermaster to the test – trust us by buying it, taking it, off-road adventuring with it, and loving it ... and if they don't, leave it."

Like the Grenadier wagon, the Quartermaster is powered by the choice of BMW 3.0-litre turbocharged inline six-cylinder petrol or diesel engines, both paired with an eight-speed ZF automatic transmission. The ute offers 264mm of ground clearance, 800mm of wading depth, payload capacities of 907kg (petrol) and 832kg (diesel), and optional front and rear diff locks. It also rides on the same heavy-duty five-link front and rear coil-spring suspension as the Grenadier wagon. 



PRO-4X WARRIOR BAKKIE

AUSSIE-CONCEIVED NISSAN NAVARA PRO-4X WARRIOR EXPANDS ITS INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE

THE Nissan Navara PRO-4X Warrior is set to expand its international presence with the Premcar-developed hero ute to launch in South Africa by the end of April 2025.

The joint collaboration between Nissan Australia, Nissan South Africa and Premcar will see the PRO-4X Warrior arrive in South Africa with a number of significant changes tailor-made for the South African market.

These changes include a new chassis tune optimised for South African roads, consisting of newly engineered and developed suspension springs and dampers; Warrior-style 17-inch alloy wheels; Maxxis RAZR all-terrain tyres suited to local conditions; a unique front bumper-bar design and assembly; wheel arch flares; and Warrior-branded front seats. It will remain powered by the 2.3-litre twin-turbo diesel engine producing a claimed 140kW and 450Nm.

“We launched the Warrior by Premcar program in 2019 with the Navara N-TREK Warrior, a vehicle that immediately resonated with our passionate Navara owners, and set new benchmarks for a locally enhanced ute in Australia,” said Andrew Humberstone, vice president and managing director of Nissan Oceania.

“We then saw the international potential which was first realised with the introduction of the Navara N-TREK Warrior in New Zealand, sharing the same refinements as the Australian model. We’re thrilled to see this Australian initiative now launch in the South African market with the Navara PRO-4X Warrior. As any Warrior owner in Australia can attest, South African drivers are in for something special.”

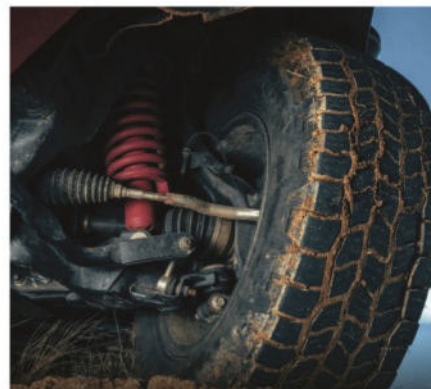
To ensure the venture runs smoothly, Premcar will expand its operations by setting up a joint venture with South African local firm, AIH, with all remanufacturing to be conducted at a Nissan production facility in Rosslyn, South Africa.

“While the vehicles will, of course, be slightly different, the end result will be the same; a ute that feels perfectly suited to South African conditions, and one that broadens capability without ever sacrificing comfort,” says Premcar CEO, Bernie Quinn.

“This isn’t just important for us, but for the Australian automotive manufacturing industry across the board. We’ve known that Australia is home to some of the brightest automotive minds on the planet, and we can’t wait to show the world what we can do.”



South African Navara PRO-4X Warriors get embossed front seats, and Warrior-style 17-inch alloy wheels with Maxxis RAZRs.



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Now is the time to get out and about to enjoy this great land and support the communities. Experienced adventurer Ron Moon has listed a few upcoming highlights, as well as essential track info. As always, check with event organisers before locking in your plans.

Heading to Cape York? It pays to keep updated on road closures and restrictions.



CAPE YORK'S SAAD POINT CLOSURE (QLD)

Visitors are advised that due to safety and road condition concerns, and until further notice, there is no access to Saad Point. This area is normally accessed via the Ussher Point track in Apudthama National Park (CYPAL).

Campsites 1, 2 and 3 at Ussher Point remain open but camping permits are required. See www.qld.gov.au/transport/conditions/roadworks/road-closures

FOREST AND ROAD CLOSURES (VIC)

There seems to be more and more road and track closures throughout our public lands in Victoria.

To help you navigate your next trip, an interactive Public Access Map found at www.ffm.vic.gov.au/permits-and-regulations/closures-of-parks-and-forests contains data on forest and park road closures (including seasonal road closures) as well as State Forest mountain bike, walking track and recreation site closures. You can zoom into an area of interest for more details. It's a great source of up-to-date information.

COPPER COAST CORNISH FESTIVAL (SA)

The towns of Kadina, Moonta and Wallaroo, will be abuzz with excitement, celebrating the Kernewek Lowender Copper Coast Cornish Festival between May 12 to 18.

With more than 60 events, the program allows you to experience unique Cornish heritage and traditions.

Enjoy a Cornish pasty, a locally brewed Swanky, food, entertainment, art, concerts, dancing and people of all ages dressing in traditional Cornish costumes.

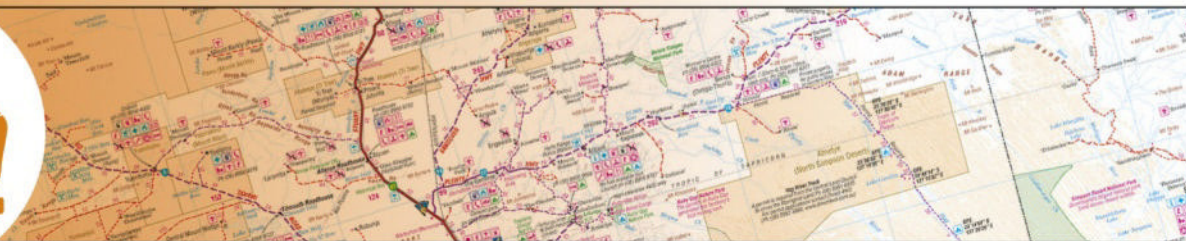
There's a cavalcade of cars and motor cycles and a street party, while you'll be spoilt

for choice as you fill your days with truly unique experiences.

For more info search kernewek-lowender-copper-coast-cornish-festival

ORD VALLEY MUSTER (WA)

This great event will run from May 16 to 25 and will include a heap of attractions including the Kimberley Moon Experience, featuring some great artists from all over Australia. There's Art in the Park, along with bush tucker and more. Check out ordvalleymuster.com.au for the latest information and to book – it sells out, so get in quick.



The unique Tasmanian fagus thrives in cool, wet locations, typically above 800m, and in autumn its crinkle-cut leaves change colour. Check it out if you are in Tassie.

CLOSURE OF PICCANNINIE PONDS (SA)

Piccanninie Ponds remains closed for water activities until further notice to allow for the regeneration of aquatic vegetation and fauna species following an outbreak of filamentous algae.

The Conservation Park, which is recognised as a wetland of international significance remains open to the public, however, entry into the water for diving and snorkeling is not permitted and permits are not being issued.

For further information, click on www.parks.sa.gov.au/know-before-you-go/closures-and-alerts/piccanninie-ponds-conservation-park

CLOSURE OF AROONA DAM SANCTUARY (SA)

Aroona Dam Sanctuary, just outside Leigh Creek, will be closed intermittently during June, August and November 2025 for a pest-control program.

These dates include from 6pm on June 12 until 6am on June 17, and again between August 28 until September 2, and from November 27 until December 2, 2025.

For updates, log on to www.parks.sa.gov.au/know-before-you-go/closures-and-alerts/aroona-sanctuary-dam



TURNING ON THE FAGUS (TAS)

In late April and May, Tasmania's only winter-deciduous native tree turns on its autumn show, triggering a pilgrimage to see entire hillsides ablaze in shades of rust, orange and gold.

The fagus hasn't quite achieved the renown of other endemic Tasmanian plants, such as the Huon pine, yet this prehistoric survivor of the Gondwana era is remarkable. It's one of only a handful of native deciduous species in Australia.



EARNED IN THE DIRT

4X4 OF THE YEAR LANDCRUISER PRADO ALTITUDE



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1. Towing capacity subject to regulatory requirements, and vehicle & equipment design limitations. Ask your Dealer for more information, including Toyota Genuine Towbar capacity and availability.



OH WHAT A FEELING

CENTENNIAL

The release of the Ranger Super Duty coincides with Ford's 100-year presence in Australia.



FORD | DESIGN



FORD RANGER SUPER DUTY REVEALED

RANGER SUPER DUTY UNVEILED IN THREE CAB STYLES AND WITH MORE DETAILS TO COME AHEAD OF 2026 LAUNCH

FORD Australia has pulled the wraps off its 2026 Ford Ranger Super Duty 4x4 ute. The Ranger SD is promising huge capacities including a 4500kg GVM, 4500kg towing capacity and 8000kg GCM. That's big news for business and private owners that need a hard-working ute with increased capacity and don't want to mess with aftermarket GVM upgrades and other modifications.

Industries like mining, forestry, fire and rescue, and others have stated to Ford that they want a vehicle from the OEM with all the capacities in place from

the manufacturer and no third parties involved.

Ford is aiming straight at the LandCruiser 79 Series with the Ranger Super Duty as it will fill the space that is currently dominated by the venerable Toyota workhorse, but users have said that they don't want to mess with aftermarket modifications and capacity upgrades as they've had to do with the 79 to make it fit for purpose.

To a lesser extent, the Ranger SD would take the place of the Mercedes G-Wagen Professional, which is used by some

organisations as well as the ADF.

The increased capacities should also appeal to recreational four-wheel drivers, especially those who tow heavy trailers and need the added GVM and GCM capacity but don't want a bigger vehicle.

The Ranger Super Duty promises to be fit for purpose straight off the showroom floor and this is the first time that the Super Duty name has been applied to anything but a Ford F-Truck.

The reveal, which was conducted globally in line with Ford Australia's celebration of 100 years in Australia,



THE BONNET FEATURES THE SUPER DUTY NAME ACROSS THE FRONT JUST LIKE IT DOES ON THE F-250 AND F-350 MODELS, WHILE THE DRIVER'S SIDE 'GUARD HAS AN ALLOWANCE FOR A SNORKEL



RANGER CABIN

The Ranger SD retains the standard Ranger cabin layout and fit-out.

showed that the Ranger SD will be available in all current body styles including double-cab, extra-cab and single-cab variants. It also showed some exciting new colours for Ranger SD including Seismic Tan and Traction Green. These colours will be exclusive to Ranger SD at first, but we think that demand might prompt Ford to make the colours more widely available across the Ranger line-up.

The Ranger SD maintains the standard Ranger cabins but has all-new front sheetmetal including the 'guards, bonnet and grille. The bonnet features the Super

Duty name across the front just like it does on the F-250 and F-350 models, while the driver's side 'guard has an allowance for an intake snorkel. Ford worked with engine-intake specialist Safari Engineering to develop the snorkel for the Ranger SD. The Ranger SD also features a steel front bumper and underbody protection plates.

The cargo tub – on models that will have it fitted – maintains the standard Ranger dimensions meaning that any tonneau covers or canopies made for Ranger will also fit on the SD. Many Ranger SDs are expected to be sold as cab-chassis variants,

ready to accept a specialised service body, tank or other equipment on the back.

The Ranger SD uses eight-lug wheels and will be offered with steel wheels as standard. The Traction Green double-cab SD also revealed the factory alloy wheels that will be offered with Super Duty branding and 275/70R18 all-terrain tyres. These trick-looking alloy wheels will come on the Ranger SD XLT that will arrive mid-2026 and is a vehicle designed for those who want a touring 4x4, and will be exclusively available on Double Cab cab-pickup variants.



ADD SAFARI

Ranger SD in Traction Green, sports a Safari snorkel developed with Ford.

THE FORD RANGER SUPER DUTY IS POWERED BY THE 3.0-LITRE V6 (LION) DIESEL ENGINE CURRENTLY USED IN RANGER AND EVEREST, AND IS BACKED BY A 10-SPEED AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION



HEAVY DUTY

WITHIN the heavy-duty chassis rails of the Ranger SD a 130-litre fuel tank runs the length of the vehicle and the Ford team claims it is built so tough that you can support the weight of the truck on it. The chassis rails are thicker than those on a standard Ranger and the suspension mounts, box mount brackets and tow bar mounts have been reinforced to cope with heavier loads.

“These enhancements are key to Ranger Super Duty being able to carry and tow bigger loads than any other factory-built midsize pickup,” said Dave Burn, chief program engineer, Ford Australia. “These larger, stronger components improve vehicle durability and reliability which is something we know our customers will appreciate.”

The SD will need every bit of that fuel capacity as it is powered by the 3.0-litre V6 (Lion) diesel engine currently used in Ranger and Everest. Backed by the 10-speed automatic transmission, that engine can be thirsty and with the added height, weight and bigger tyres of the SD it will be akin to driving a kitted-up model.

Ford also revealed that there will be updates to the Lion V6 engine to help



it cope with the increased load limits and enhance durability, but didn't go into specifics. The engine is being set to run to EU6 emissions standards and as such will use AdBlue SCR.

After consultation with key end-users of the Ranger SD, Ford has fitted the vehicle with a manual DPF re-gen button so the re-gen can be done where the vehicle is in a safe place, not, for example, when parked on dry grass when the heat generated could start a fire. DPF regenerations in regular Rangers are

BODY BUILD

Ford is working with makers of service bodies, canopies, water tanks and other equipment to fit the Ranger SD.





CONSIDERING THE BESPOKE HEAVY-DUTY HARDWARE UNDER THE RANGER SD, WE EXPECT THAT THE PRICE WOULD HAVE TO BE AROUND THAT OF THE \$90,000 RANGER RAPTOR, OR HIGHER DEPENDING ON THE FINAL MODEL AND SPEC

done automatically when required and usually unknown to the vehicle operator.

Other heavy-duty items under the Ranger SD include uprated axles to give it its added capability. This includes a semi-floating rear differential taken from a Transit and a HD front diff with all-new control arms and a front locker to go with the rear one. The wider wheel track is the same as that of the Ranger Raptor.

Another feature of Ranger SD that is taken from F-Trucks is the inclusion of onboard scales. These are mounted in the vehicle and the operator is able to check load weights and balance via the multimedia screen. This features is also helpful when judging downball weight when towing. The scales will work in conjunction with an updated version of Ford's Tow Pro technology with Pro Back-up assistance.

Ford is also working with ARB to develop bullbars and other accessories for the SD. The OEM is also working with manufacturers of service bodies, canopies, water tanks and other equipment that operators will want to fit to Ranger SD so that they will be able to fit them with minimal fuss as soon as the vehicle goes on sale.

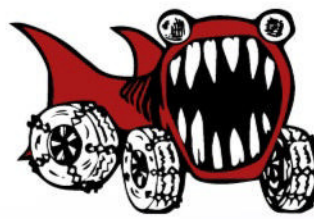
Ford says that it has already received firm orders for fleets of Ranger SD despite the price being unknown and the final specification revealed. The new model will go on sale early in 2026 in standard trim, with the Ranger Super Duty XLT to follow mid-year.

Considering the bespoke heavy-duty hardware under the Ranger SD, we expect that the price would have to be around that of the \$90,000 Ranger Raptor, or higher depending on the final model and spec. 





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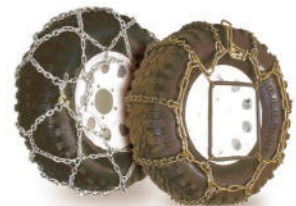
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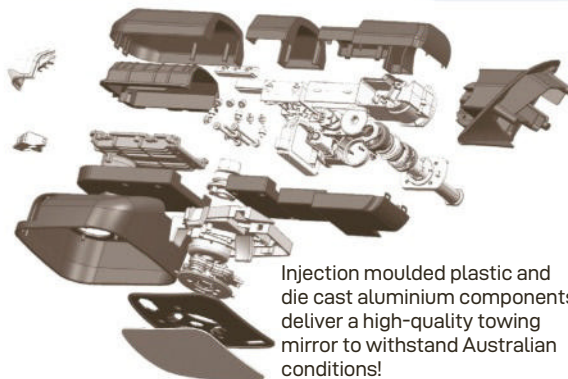
Headset display will provide the same view as the existing factory fitted mirrors.

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MSA prides itself on being at the leading edge of industry trends and it is our vision to stay there. The camera feature in towing mirrors, has long been a topic of discussion in the 4WD, caravanning and adventure industry. The MSA team has recently finalised the implementation of the camera provision into the highly popular MSA POWER FOLD™ Towing Mirrors Range.

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- Unique pivot design
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- ADR Compliant
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MSA
4X4 ACCESSORIES



SHARK ATTACK

BYD'S SHARK 6 UTE IS A STUNNING FIRST ENTRY INTO THE MARKET, BUT THERE'S STILL ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS PHOTOS ELLEN DEWAR

BUILD Your Dreams (BYD) made big waves late last year when it announced and showed its Shark 6 midsize AWD ute. Not only was the Shark the first PHEV-powered vehicle in the ute segment but it promised stunning performance at a stunning launch price of \$57,900.

Stunning because \$57K barely gets you into a Ranger XLS or HiLux SR5, and the Shark comes with much more standard equipment than either of those two market leaders.

The company backed up the fanfare selling a tad more than 2000 Sharks in its first month on sale (February '25),

outselling ever-popular utes like the Isuzu D-MAX, Mitsubishi Triton and Nissan Navara. It will be interesting to see if BYD can keep the momentum rolling on, and for how long it can maintain the current price point.

Early adopters that jumped in to get a Shark shouldn't be disappointed in their purchase as they have a large, efficient, extremely well-equipped ute that is going to tick all the boxes for many buyers. In its single specification, the Shark 6 includes features and interior finishes that are only available on top-spec 4x4 utes from other manufacturers ... and at a considerably higher price than \$57K.







WHAT IS IT?

BYD is a Chinese company that builds and sells more EVs in its homeland than almost all of its competitors put together. It's well-established in the EV market and is spreading globally quicker than the spicy cough, and it seeks that market domination wherever it sells cars.

The Shark 6 is BYD's first ute and it's targeted straight at the Australian market where such vehicles are so popular that they make up a large part of overall sales.

The Shark 6 is a familiar four-door

cab on a separate ladder-frame chassis, but that's where the similarities to convention end. The suspension is independent at each corner using double wishbones and coil springs, and there is no low range in the drivetrain. In fact, there is no transfer case at all, nor any connection between the front and back wheels.

Size-wise, it's at the bigger end of the midsize ute segment, closest to the Ford Ranger and VW Amarok in size, and the generous cabin space is nicely appreciated.

IN ITS SINGLE SPECIFICATION, THE SHARK 6 INCLUDES FEATURES AND INTERIOR FINISHES THAT ARE ONLY AVAILABLE ON TOP-SPEC 4X4 UTES FROM OTHER MANUFACTURERS



SIZE IT UP		
	SHARK	RANGER
LENGTH	5457mm	5370mm
WIDTH	1971mm	2208mm
HEIGHT	1925mm	1886mm
WHEELBASE	3260mm	3270mm
WHEEL TRACK	1660mm	1620mm

Not much travel from the coil-sprung IRS



View the 15.6-inch screen in landscape or portrait mode.



POWER UP

PROPULSION comes courtesy of a pair of electric motors – one each at the front and back axles, plus a petrol engine that can operate on the front axle when called for, but its primary use is charging the batteries that power the electric motors.

The ICE power unit is a 135kW-260Nm 1.5L turbo-petrol engine mounted longitudinally in the front of the vehicle along with a 130kW-330Nm electric motor. The motor powering the back wheels is isolated from the front. It makes 150kW and 340Nm and comes into effect when required either for traction or performance.

That's 321kW and 650Nm in total!

Most of the time it's the electric motors driving the Shark 6 while the ICE maintains charge in the batteries, but the petrol engine cuts in at speeds above 70km/h and when full throttle is applied. Put your right foot down in the Shark and BYD claims it will dash from 0-100km/h in just 5.7 seconds, and we have no reason to question that – the Shark gets up and goes hard when you ask it to!

The battery is 29.58kWh and sits low and flat in the chassis. BYD claims a range of up to 100km on a full charge using EV power only, depending on driving conditions.

The battery is charged by the ICE petrol engine, regenerative off-throttle charging or when plugged into a charger or home GPO. The petrol tank holds just 60 litres of fuel but with a 2.0L/100km official consumption

rating, it gives close to 700km in touring range before you need to fill the tank or charge up from an external power source.

Driving the Shark around town is mainly in full EV mode so it's super quiet, and even when the petrol engine cuts in to charge the system you barely hear or notice it, resulting in very smooth and quiet propulsion. It's only when you put your foot down that you notice the ICE powering the front wheels, but even then it is quiet and smooth, particularly when compared to diesel-engined utes. These attributes, and the well-appointed interior, make the Shark 6 a very agreeable town ute.

The Shark 6's cabin is spacious and reasonably well laid out. The finishes and touchpoints are soft, giving a feel of quality and luxury missing in most midsize utes which are more commercial-grade. The orange trim on the vents detracts from the quality appearance but that's purely subjective; someone must like it.

The seats are covered in synthetic leather that has a genuine leather look and feel. The front seats are both heated and ventilated and have power adjustment. The rear seat has room for adult-size passengers with a reasonable recline on the backrest making it better for comfort than many other utes, especially on longer drives.

The centre infotainment screen is a huge 15.6-inch unit that sits in landscape mode in standard placement, but it can be rotated 90° to be viewed in portrait configuration

if desired. However, if you wear polarised sunglasses the view of the screen might go dark for you in this upright mode. The landscape position is easier to view anyway.

The multimedia unit has DAB radio, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, and inbuilt satnav with free map updates for three years. The 12-speaker Dynaudio sound system adds to the premium feel. Also included is dual-zone climate control and a wireless phone charging pad.

From a functionality point of view, it's good to see the temperature controls are always on the screen so you don't need to go looking for them through menus, but with no physical dials or knobs, you can't use them without taking your eyes off the road. There are physical rollers on the steering wheel and consoles for sound system volume control which is a plus for usability.

There are plenty of USB power outlets for both front and back seat passengers as well as a 230V-10A power outlet at the back of the console. There's another three 230V-10A GPOs in the cargo tub for running tools and appliances off the battery pack.

Orange vents aside, the high levels of equipment and features give the Shark's cabin a quality feel that is lacking in the top models of the popular midsize utes, and only found elsewhere in full-size American pickups costing twice as much as the BYD.

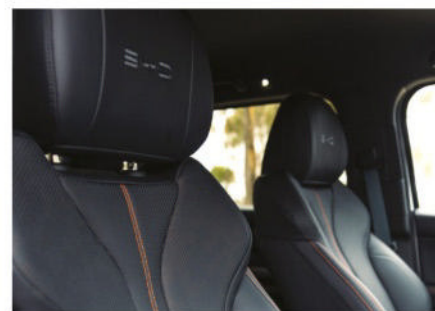
Tyres are a common 265/65R18 size and BYD offers the option of Toyo or BFG A/Ts as well as a choice of alloy wheel designs.



Driver's dashboard provides relevant information, including five drive modes to choose from.



The Continental tyres are quiet on the road, but not really suitable off the beaten track. BYD does have AT tyres as options.



SUBTLE SAFETY

AS you would expect of any all-new vehicle, the BYD Shark 6 features all the latest ADAS tech including a driver monitor with all the associated bells and whistles. We were pleasantly surprised to find that the system was nowhere near as intrusive and annoying as similar systems in most other new vehicles.

The warning chimes are subtle and not too offensive and the ADAS doesn't constantly fight you at the steering wheel on freeways and backroads ... but try and make a lane change without using an indicator (common practice in Melbourne) and the system lets you know it's there and that it's working.



ON THE ROAD

NOT so smooth is the suspension which is very stiff and gives the Shark a firm ride on smooth roads and a rough ride on Melbourne's woeful roads and highways. One particular patch of potholes on exiting a roundabout rattled the Shark to such an extent that the whole cabin shook violently, leading me to wonder how it would feel once we got on a dirt road.

I didn't have to wait long as we soon hit the access road to our photography location; a well-groomed gravel road that has small corrugations in it. Again the Shark 6 shook violently with the scuttle shake you used to get in some convertible cars, but in this case it



SIZE-WISE, IT'S AT THE BIGGER END OF THE MIDSIZE UTE SEGMENT, CLOSEST TO THE FORD RANGER AND VW AMAROK IN SIZE

was felt through the whole passenger compartment.

I swapped into another 4x4 ute (OEM suspension and tyres) and drove up the same road, and while the corrugations could be felt it didn't react and shake hard like the BYD did. With this in mind, I would have concerns about taking a BYD Shark 6 on standard suspension on any extended outback travel. A softer and more compliant suspension package would be warranted, and would improve the ride quality both on and off the road.

The shortcomings of the suspension also revealed themselves as the track deteriorated and the lack of suspension travel has it easily cocking wheels and losing traction. This in turn showed up

the shortcomings of the drive system. After stopping on what could only be described as a gravel driveway with a slight incline, the Shark 6 wouldn't advance off the mark, only spinning a single front tyre.

As described earlier, there is no mechanical connection between the front and rear wheels, only an electronic one. The Shark 6 does have multiple drive modes – Normal, Mud Land, Sand Land, Snow Land and Mountain Land. In the Normal mode, which you would expect to use on such a gravel track, the Shark 6 is essentially a front-wheel drive vehicle and it wasn't until I selected one of the other modes that drive was applied to the rear wheels by its motor

and the Shark 6 progressed.

It was no surprise that the Shark 6 failed to progress when pointed at a steeper rutted track when in Normal mode, but playing with the modes did bring positive results. We found that Mountain Land mode worked the best and got the Shark 6 up the track ... but it did so kicking and screaming. The electronics are slow to react, and feel and sound a lot like the early ETC systems from Land Rover that came out in the Discovery Series 2 (update model without centre diff lock) and early Freelander models. It's slow to react and noisy in doing so, resulting in excessive wheelspin and kicking up plenty of dust.

Suspension and traction were found wanting off road.



GEARING UP

WITH its electric motor powering the rear wheels any sort of locker would probably come as a software update from BYD, but for owners looking to upfit their Shark 6 for specific usage, BYD has partnered with Ironman to develop a range of accessories. These must be purchased from BYD at the time of buying your Shark and they include a choice of front bumpers including a bullbar, roof racks, roller tonneau cover and a canopy.

With the exceptionally high sales of the Shark 6 in its first months on sale, we expect other aftermarket equipment manufacturers to soon jump on board with gear for this ute.



SUMMARY

I EXPECTED better of the Shark 6 considering how 'advanced' it feels in many areas, and I was disappointed in its performance off sealed roads. This is not an off-road 4x4 ute. I brought up these tractive deficiencies of the Shark 6 when we drove a pre-production prototype last year and BYD said it would be updated and addressed in the production model.

The off-highway deficiencies aside, the BYD Shark 6 is an exceptional ute that brings new levels of efficiency, interior trim and design to the ute segment.

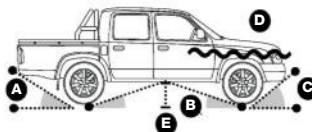
I said at the start that the Shark 6 represents a great first entry into the ute market, and that comment stands. Now we await to see how the brand seeks to address its deficiencies, or whether it prefers to leave the vehicle as simply a ripper town ute. 

BYD SHARK 6	
PRICE	\$57,000
ENGINE	PHEV; turbocharged petrol engine w/ electric motors front and rear
CAPACITY	1.5L
MAX POWER	ICE 135kW, EV 130kW (front) 150kW (rear)
MAX TORQUE	ICE 260Nm, EV 310Nm (front) 340Nm (rear)
TRANSMISSION	N/A
4X4 SYSTEM	Individual between front and rear wheels
CONSTRUCTION	4-door ute on ladder frame
FRONT SUSPENSION	Independent, double wishbones w/ coil springs
REAR SUSPENSION	Independent, double wishbones w/ coil springs
TYRES	265/65R18 on alloy wheels
KERB WEIGHT	2710kg
GVM	3500kg
GCM	5750kg
TOWING CAPACITY	2500kg
PAYLOAD	790kg
SEATS	5
FUEL TANK	60L
ADR FUEL CONSUMPTION	2.0L/100km



BYD SHARK 6

A DEPARTURE ANGLE	19.3°
B RAMPOVER ANGLE	17°
C APPROACH ANGLE	31°
D WADING DEPTH	700mm
E GROUND CLEARANCE	230mm



THE FINISHES AND TOUCHPOINTS ARE SOFT, GIVING A FEEL OF QUALITY AND LUXURY MISSING IN MOST MIDSIZE UTES WHICH ARE MORE COMMERCIAL-GRADE

DRIVE

TOYOTA PRADO ALTITUDE

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS PHOTOS ELLEN DEWAR

ALTITUDE WITH ATTITUDE

MR 4WD GIVES TOYOTA'S 250 SERIES PRADO A GOING
OVER TO CREATE A TOP TOURING WAGON





Nick Walford didn't waste time customising the 250 Series Prado into a cool off-road weapon.



WHEN you've owned more than 50 four-wheel drives in a relatively short life, you're kind of justified in carrying the Mr 4WD tag on your number plates. While Nick Walford's 250 Series Toyota

Prado wears an extra 'D' on the end of the title, you can rest assured that the MR4WD plates are bolted to one of his other rides.

Nick's current fleet includes a couple of TroopCarriers, a pair of super-neat 80 Series Cruisers, a Patrol and, of course, this new Prado ... and that's just the

4x4s!

"It was a new platform to test and build," Nick told us when we asked why the 250 Series. "I have had two Prados previously and they are the best all-round car."

The 250 Series takes the Prado model to new heights in terms of space, comfort and ability, and has prompted some to say that it has finally earned the LandCruiser badge it wears. Of course, the 250 Series is sold as the new LandCruiser in the United States and some other countries where the Prado name has no meaning.

Nick chose the Altitude as it



There's plenty of good gear underneath and around the Prado, with more to come.



With the JACX Alpha suspension, Nick says the Prado now drives like a Trophy



Nick's Prado
Altitude is
certainly not your
everyday suburban
family SUV.





represents the most off-road focused model in the range thanks to its Multi-Terrain modes, rear locking diff and disconnecting front sway bar. It also comes in this super-cool blue-and-white livery. Previously called Retro Blue, and still going by that name on US-market LandCruisers, Toyota Australia now calls it Ningaloo Blue. Whatever you want to call it, we reckon it's a winner!

Nicks Ningaloo Blue Prado wasn't going to stay stock for long and we first spotted it late in 2024 when it was already wearing a replacement rear bar with wheel carrier from The Cruiser Company (TCC) in Melbourne. Not only was it one of the first new Prados that

we saw on the road but it was already on the way to becoming modified, which certainly piqued our interest in it.

The bullbar you see on the vehicle in these photos is also from TCC, and by the time you're reading this TCC rock sliders should be fitted as well. TCC is committed to getting quality protection gear out and available for new models as early as possible and the company's product range is rapidly growing ... and not just for Toyotas.

All of TCC's bar work is made inhouse in its Melbourne facility, and this front bar is made using 5mm plate with provisions for a winch, lights and

**THE RAISED
SUSPENSION
PROVIDES ENOUGH
CLEARANCE
TO ALLOW THE
FITMENT OF
35X12.5R18 TOYO
R/T DONUTS UNDER
THE SHEET METAL**



ROH Assault alloys
really look the part.



THE 250 SERIES TAKES THE PRADO MODEL TO NEW HEIGHTS IN TERMS OF SPACE, COMFORT AND ABILITY, AND HAS PROMPTED SOME TO SAY THAT IT HAS FINALLY EARNED THE LANDCRUISER BADGE IT WEARS

antenna mounting, while being airbag compatible. Nick has fitted a set of Bushranger VCT driving lights to the Prado's bar and there's a Bushranger winch on the way soon.

The TCC rear bar is likewise made inhouse using 5mm steel and it adds plenty of protection to the back of the Prado along with the flexibility of twin swing-out carriers. Nick has the Altitude set-up with a full-size 35-inch spare on the offside and a jerry-can holder on the nearside swing-out.

Another great Australian company turning out high-quality 4x4 products is JMACX, and Nick's Prado is fitted with the latest Alpha suspension system from the Queensland business. The suspension kit includes JMACX's 2.5-inch bore remote reservoir

adjustable shock absorbers, coils to suit the Prado's weight, Blackhawk replacement upper control arms, an adjustable Panhard bar, and extended rear sway bar links.

The raised suspension provides enough clearance to allow the fitment of 35x12.5R18 Toyo R/T donuts under the sheet metal. They are fitted to ROH Assault alloys and really look the part while giving the Prado extra off-road ability.

The roof rack is from another Australian brand Rhino-Rack; it's the new Recon Rack developed specifically for the 250 Series Prado. Mounted to the rack is an Alu-Cab rooftop tent. It's the LT-50 RTT which is a relatively compact two-person tent that still has plenty of features including large

Add-ons include Alu-Cab RTT, and rear bar swingouts for the spare and jerry can.





The RTT is fixed to Rhino-Rack's new Recon Rack developed for the 250 Series Prado.



The Cruiser Company supplied the bullbar, with a Bushranger winch to be fitted.



openings providing three-way access from the back or sides. It's a lightweight tent, weighing in at less than 50kg, which is most important when you are considering the weight going up on your roof and the effects that weight can have on vehicle dynamics.

At the time of our photo shoot, Alu-Cab was still working on developing the brackets to attach one of its awnings to the Recon rack.

While Nick has a collection of 4x4s, they are not just for show; he tells us that his favourite place to get off road is K'gari and the Prado already did a trip up to the SEQ islands before it was kitted out. The day after our photo shoot in Victoria, he was driving it back to Queensland for the Brisbane 4x4 show, and then it was back across to the

islands for some more time in the big sandpit.

Nick commended on the performance of the Alpha suspension when driving on the beaches by saying, "It feels like you are driving a Trophy Truck! It's fully adjustable so I can dial it in for comfort but it's right at home on the beaches."

There's more to come for Nick's Altitude. When he stops for a minute there's the aforementioned winch and awning to be fitted, and he hasn't even started on the inside yet, where a set of storage drawers and a fridge will soon find a home.

If you want to keep up with the build, Nick's travels, and check out some of the other rigs in his shed, see his Instagram at mr_4wd. 

NICK CHOSE THE ALTITUDE AS IT REPRESENTS THE MOST OFF-ROAD FOCUSED MODEL IN THE RANGE THANKS TO ITS MULTI-TERRAIN MODES, REAR LOCKING DIFF AND DISCONNECTING FRONT SWAY BAR



A go-anywhere Prado, Nick says it excels on SEQ's beach tracks.



The Alpha suspension system is from Qld company JMACX.



DRIVE

TOYOTA PRADO
- NEW VS OLD

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS PHOTOS ELLEN DEWAR

TOO COOL FOR SCHOOL (RUNS)



The 70 Series Toyota Prado was never officially sold in Australia, so when you see one on the tracks it tends to stand out. While we had a 250 Series Prado on test we saw it as a perfect opportunity to line it up with the original model.



1. Owner Saul Zuvic.
2. His 1999 KZJ78 model
Prado. 3. Toyota factory
front bumper has modern
Stedi spotlights fitted.



1



2



THE 250 Series Toyota Prado is the fourth generation of the 4x4 wagon to be sold in Australia following on from the 150, 120 and 90 Series models that set the framework for what has become one of the country's most popular 4x4s for off-road adventures and school drop-offs.

Not widely known is that there was a Prado well before the 90 Series ... but it was never sold by Toyota in Australia.

The 70 Series Prado first appeared in 1990 when it was sold in Japan and other south-east Asian markets as the 77 and 78 Series and, although it was never sold in Australia by Toyota, there are a few grey-import examples here now.

The 70 Series Prado used what is essentially the four-door wagon body that we eventually got here as the VDJ76 in 2007, but it was fitted with unique front sheet metal, grille and headlights, plus it had coil-spring suspension and lighter duty axles borrowed from the HiLux of the time. The light-duty wagon was sold as the Prado in some markets and as the LandCruiser II in others.

This adaptation of light-duty underpinnings was similar to what we saw under the Bundera in Australia. The Bundera was a short-wheelbase, two-door 70 Series that got coils and HiLux axles, and was available here with a removable top. Other LandCruiser 70 Series of the time were commercial vehicles that rode on leaf springs and big diffs for hard work, and in the case of the Bundera the inclusion of coil-spring suspension and light-duty axles was made to make the basic vehicles better suited to family and recreational use.

The 70 Series Prado you see here is a 1999 KZJ78 model owned by Saul Zuvic. Saul imported the Toyota from Japan and he uses it for off-road adventures mainly in Victoria.

As the model name suggests, Saul's car is powered by the 1KZ 3.0-litre turbo-diesel engine which we are familiar with from early HiLux models and also the 90 Series Prado. The engine is backed by a three-speed automatic transmission and dual-range transfer case that is push-button/vacuum operated.

While we had the 250 Series Prado Kakadu on loan, we took the opportunity to look at this new model alongside Saul's OG classic.

The 250 series takes the Prado model to new heights in terms of space, comfort and ability, and has prompted some to say that it has finally earned the LandCruiser badge it wears





Toyota went back in time, chasing cool with the modelling of the Prado 250 Series.



The old 78 Prado is highly specified considering its age and the fact that it is a 70 Series

OLD SCHOOL COOL

RETRO 4x4s are becoming collectible and there's a certain cool factor that comes with driving one. That coolness is amplified when the vehicle is something different, and the Prado front end differentiates the KZJ78 from the VDJ and now GDJ76s that are common in Australia. Saul says it always raises eyebrows and promotes questions from those that see it when he is driving.

Toyota has gone retro with the look of the 250 Series, but it's something that's hard to manufacture and get the right level of cool. That said, Saul recognises the touches made by Toyota's design team

"I love the exterior of the 250," he commented. "It harks back to the best-looking LandCruiser in my opinion, the 62 Series with the rectangle headlights. The proportions seem similar to the 80 Series,

and the rear also reminds me of the 80.

"It's refined and classy, but tough looking at the same time. But when I hop back in the 70 Series, I find the 250 lacks character. I wonder if in 30 years enthusiasts will be fighting to get their hands on a 250, if, of course, they last that long."

The old 78 Prado is highly specified considering its age and the fact it is a 70 Series. As well as the auto trans and push-button transfer case, it has power windows with auto-up function, something not in a new 70 Series, while the cloth trim is also plush by 70 standards.

The dash panel is a mix of 70 and 80 Series style featuring a soft-touch padded top that curves over analogue gauges. Saul has added a double-DIN sound system for a touch of modernity, but it remains a far cry from what's in the 250 Series Kakadu.



An imported early-model Prado is a rarity out on the tracks.





21ST CENTURY LUXURY

THE interior of the 250 Series, on the other hand, is loaded with tech and features starting with a premium 12.3-inch multimedia screen with wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, Bluetooth, cloud-based inbuilt sat-nav, a panoramic moon roof, leather-accented seat trim with eight-way power adjustment and power lumbar support and memory for the driver and four-way power adjustment for the passenger seat, heated and ventilated front and second-row seats, manually-adjustable driver seat cushion length, digital rear-view mirror, heated steering wheel and heads-up display. There's also a digital instrument cluster, a refrigerated console chiller, power adjustable steering column and a JBL sounds system blasting out through 14 speakers.

It's a full-on luxury interior worthy of the \$100K price tag of the top-of the line model, but it will be many decades before the 250 will ever be as cool as Saul's retro 78.

Once a rugged, simple four-wheel drive, today's Prado has come a long way.



Toyota's old and new
Prados delight in
different ways.



**The suspension in the 250 soaks up
rough unsealed roads, making them
feel like fresh tarmac would in the
70 Series Prado**



Saul's Prado has Tough Dog raised coils and Pro Comp shocks.



New Prado mimics its elder in the successful four-door wagon design.



ON THE TRACKS

After a stint behind the wheel of the Kakadu, Saul said, "It's a world away from where the Prado started, as a rugged, simple four-wheel drive. The suspension in the 250 soaks up rough unsealed roads, making them feel like fresh tarmac would in the 70 Series Prado. It's comfortable and quiet in the cab, and feels like a luxury yacht, as you would expect from a modern four-wheel drive pushing a \$100K price tag."

Meanwhile, we jumped in Saul's 78 on the same tracks. Getting behind the wheel the seating position is much like that in my own 1985 BJ73 but the dash pad is a more modern and softer design. The 1KZ engine sounds more like the B-series engine in my Cruiser than the 1GD powering the 250, but it gets along with a similar feel. The auto transmission feels great for its age and the updated suspension is doing a top job.

Saul has upgraded the suspension under the Prado with Tough Dog 50mm raised coils and Pro Comp monotube shocks.

There's a familiar rattle and squeak from the rear doors of the 70 but it just adds to the cacophony that comes with a classic old off-roader, adding to the character.

Saul has set up the 78 as a touring 4x4 and to date it has taken him to Coffin Bay

in South Australia, as well as Victorian High Country staples like Mount Buffalo, Mount Buller, Howqua Hills, Alpine National Park, Mount Wellington, the Avon Wilderness area and Licola.

Touring kit includes a set of drawers with a fridge slide holding a MyCoolman fridge, a 100Ah lithium battery, a Rhino-Rack and platform, and a set of Stedi spotlights on the factory Toyota front bumper. Saul had a set of steel wheels wearing 33x10.5R15 BFGs on it the day of our shoot but we've also seen it wearing skinnies with retro Toyota hubcaps, which look super cool.

"Would I trade it for my 70?" said Saul of the 250. "Yes, of course, it would be daft not to. But would I love it as much and will it be spraining necks with a street presence you can only get from a 1990s vintage Cruiser? No way!"

It will be many years before a 2025 model 4x4 could ever be considered cool or vintage, and would the authorities let us drive old cars by that time? It can be argued that keeping an old vehicle like Saul's Prado on the road is much better for the environment than building an all-new one, with all the plastics, chemicals and precious metals required, no matter how much alternative fuels and technology you throw at it. 



There's a familiar rattle and squeak from the rear doors of the 70 but it just adds to the cacophony that comes with a classic old off-roader

Nostalgia aside, old Toyota 4x4s like Saul's remain capable off-roaders.





WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS

{SIX PACK

THE RAM'S NEW
TURBO-SIX LEAVES
THE OLD MODEL'S
HEMI V8 FOR DEAD





THE Hemi V8-powered Ram 1500 is no more and in place of the iconic V8 now sits a new inline six-cylinder petrol engine. If you missed out on the last of the V8-powered 1500s, you shouldn't be worried because aside from lacking that sweet V8 rumble the new Hurricane I6 engine is a beauty.

BOOSTED SIX

WITH a pair of turbochargers boosting the 3.0-litre mill, claimed outputs are impressive; 313kW-635Nm in standard (SO) trim and a stonking 403kW-707Nm in HO trim. In the case

of the SO that's 7.6 per cent more power and 14.2 per cent more torque than the 5.7-litre Hemi V8, while the HO Hurricane makes 38.5 per cent more power and 27.2 per cent more torque, which is way more grunt than the naturally-aspirated Hemi V8 ever made! The outputs of the new Hurricane I6 are only surpassed by the supercharged Hemi in the wild Ram TRX model.

The differences between the SO and HO versions of the engine are more than just a simple tune. The HO has a lower compression ratio than the SO allowing for higher boost pressures, a higher-capacity

fuel pump and a 6100rpm redline compared to 5800rpm on the SO.

Initially available in just two models while the V8 1500s are still running out, the Hurricane-powered Rams available at launch are the standard output powered Laramie Sport at \$141,950 (+ORC) and the HO-motivated Limited at \$159,950 (+ORC). Ram Trucks Australia (RTA) tells us that the new powertrain will become available in more variants in the near future. We always thought that the low-spec Big Horn model was the pick of the range and look forward to its return with Hurricane power.



LUXURY

Interior comfort has been a hallmark of the Ram brand, and the 2025 1500s uphold the tradition.

MIDLIFE MAKEOVER

THE introduction of the Hurricane engine represents a midlife update for the DT series of Ram 1500. Also fresh for 2025 is a new look for the front end with LED lights standard on both models, new LED tail-lights either side of a power tailgate, and new 20-inch wheels on the Laramie and 22s on the Limited. Inside there's a new 14-inch infotainment screen and a separate 10.25-inch screen for the front seat passenger. The passenger touchscreen is able to play movies and streaming while on the move as it is not visible from the driver's seat. A clever function gives the passenger the ability to look up and find locations on mapping apps while driving, and once found can then send that map/info to the main screen for the driver.

The 19-speaker Harman Kardon sound system certainly adds to the streaming/video experience.

In addition to the above upgrades, the Limited model gets massaging front seats, automatic deploying side steps and the aforementioned 707Nm

HO engine.

Both Ram models are equipped with heated and ventilated eight-way adjustable front seats with the heating and ventilating extending to the outer seats in the back. Of course, there's acres of leather covering the large and comfortable pews.

The rear seat is massive and will comfortably accommodate three adults and there is a heap of storage under the back seat. The Ram's interior feels more like a luxury car than a work truck and this will no doubt tempt plenty of buyers to step up from a midsize ute.

Safety-wise, the Limited gets all the modern features but the Laramie Sport misses out on the 360° view camera, drowsy-driver detection, traffic-sign recognition, evasive steering assist, and intersection collision assist features. There's nothing really missing there that we'd call deal-breakers.

More important is towing capability, which has always been a strong point of full-size trucks, and the Ram 1500 Laramie retains its maximum braked 4500kg towing capacity, while the

Limited makes do with 4200kg.

Payload is never great in these trucks when you consider their size but it's up in the new Rams to 863kg in the Laramie and 782kg in the Limited; still well short of what you can haul in most of the midsize 4x4 utes but on par with the other 1500-class trucks.

The cargo tub is huge and both models come standard with the Rambox storage system built into the sides. There's also a power-lift tailgate and a fold-down step to make accessing the tub easier. The tonneau cover is a semi-solid one that folds up against the headboard when not in use.



TRACK TIME

WHILE towing and load capacities might be important to many Ram owners, RTA wanted to focus on the performance of its new Hurricane engine for the launch of the 2025 models, no doubt hoping to dispel any thoughts that it wouldn't stack up to that of the V8 engine.

A series of 0-100km/h sprints with onboard timing equipment confirmed what the seat of the pants told us – the Hurricane powered Ram is no slouch!

The Standard Output Laramie knocks over the 0-100km/h dash in a swift mid-six-seconds sprint, while the HO powered Limited cuts almost a full second off that time getting down to the mid-fives. This truck really gets up and boogies off the mark, helped by its on-demand 4x4 system sending the drive to all four tyres which were scrabbling for traction as we left the gate.

A drive loop around the proving-ground circuit followed by a road loop



demonstrated that the Ram 1500 has the chassis to match the performance on offer, but importantly it demonstrated the difference between the suspension of both models.

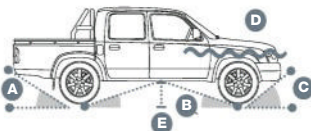
Considering its size and mass the unladen Ram cruised admirably around the proving-ground circuit, dealing with bumps and undulations as well as tightening lines of the various corners on the course.

The lower-spec models in the Ram 1500 range, the Laramie Sport included, use an all-coil spring suspension set-up with IFS on the front and a live axle at the rear.

The Limited gets an adjustable air-spring suspension set-up which, along with its low-profile sports tyres on 22-inch wheels, delivers a busy ride over high-frequency bumps and choppy roads.

2025 RAM 1500 LARAMIE SPORT

A DEPARTURE ANGLE	21.7°
B RAMPOVER ANGLE	18.7°
C APPROACH ANGLE	20.2°
D WADING DEPTH	N/A
E GROUND CLEARANCE	217mm



THE INTRODUCTION OF THE HURRICANE ENGINE REPRESENTS A MIDLIFE UPDATE FOR THE DT SERIES OF RAM 1500



FEATURING

Ram 1500 highlights include in situ tub storage boxes, overhead switches and panoramic sunroof.





THE RAM 1500 LARAMIE RETAINS ITS MAXIMUM BRAKED 4500KG TOWING CAPACITY, WHILE THE LIMITED MAKES DO WITH 4200KG



NICE

Limited rides on 22-inch wheels, and both models have stylish new LED headlights.

NO DIRT

THIS drive didn't include any off-road or gravel tracks, but our previous experience with the Limited on this suspension and tyre combination showed it to be awful on gravel roads, transmitting all the bumps and ruts through to the passenger compartment. The steel-spring suspension on the lower grades combined with tyres that have a taller sidewall does a far better job of smoothing out such roads and would be my choice every day. The 22s might look good but they are not suited to this style of vehicle. Combined with the air suspension, they ruin what would otherwise be considered a luxurious ride.

When Ram Trucks Australia (RTA) is looking at further models to add to the 1500 range, we'd love to see an option with all the features of the

Limited but with conventional steel springs and 20-inch or even 18-inch wheels.

RTA set the agenda for the rise in full-size American pickup trucks in Australia when it started importing and converting left-hand drive Rams back in 2015. Part of the automotive vehicle and accessories giant Ateco, RTA partnered with Walkinshaw Automotive to re-engineer the LHD trucks to RHD and soon found a largely untapped market that has boomed in the years since, with RTA selling more full-size trucks in Australia than any of the brands that have jumped on its tail.

With the introduction of the Hurricane I6 engine to the range RTA should be able to maintain its strong sales, so long as buyers can get over the loss of the V8 and appreciate the better performance of the I6. 

RAM RAID

Laramie left, limited right. Powered by Hurricane six-pot turbo-petrols.



	2025 RAM 1500 LARAMIE SPORT	2025 RAM 1500 LIMITED
PRICE	\$141,950 (+ORC)	\$159,950 (+ORC)
ENGINE	Bi-turbo petrol I6	Bi-turbo petrol I6
CAPACITY	2993cc	2993cc
MAX POWER	313 kW at 5200rpm	313 kW at 5200rpm
MAX TORQUE	635 Nm at 3500rpm	635 Nm at 3500rpm
TRANSMISSION	8-speed automatic	8-speed automatic
4X4 SYSTEM	On-demand dual range w/ 4x4 auto mode	On-demand dual range w/ 4x4 auto mode
CONSTRUCTION	4-door ute on ladder frame chassis	4-door ute on ladder frame chassis
FRONT SUSPENSION	IFS w/ A-arms and coil springs	IFS w/ A-arms and height adjustable airbags
REAR SUSPENSION	Multi-link live axle w/ coil springs	Multi-link live axle w/ height adjustable airbags
TYRES	275/55R20 on alloys	285/45R22xl on alloys
WEIGHT	2642kg	2722kg
GVM	3505kg	3505kg
GCM	7711kg	7285kg
TOWING CAPACITY	4.5t w/ correct towbar	4.2t w/ correct towbar
PAYLOAD	863kg	782kg
SEATS	5	5
FUEL TANK	98L	125L
ADR FUEL CONSUMPTION	10.74L/100km (combined)	11.9L/100km (combined)
ON TEST FUEL CONSUMPTION	N/A	N/A



SHORT STACK

THE WRANGLER IS THE QUINTESSENTIAL JEEP MODEL AND THE SHORT WHEELBASE RUBICON REPRESENTS ITS PUREST FORM. WE JUMPED BEHIND THE WHEEL OF THE LATEST ITERATION OF THIS ICON TO REMIND US HOW GOOD IT IS

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS PHOTOS ELLEN DEWAR



MADE IN THE
U.S.A.





GO ANYWHERE

This is the sort of terrain the Jeep Wrangler Rubicon excels in.

We've always said that the Jeep Wrangler Rubicon is the most off-road capable 4x4 vehicle that you can get off the showroom floor and the addition of a new turbocharged petrol engine hasn't changed our opinion.

Our recent time in a short wheelbase 2025 Rubicon gave us the chance to tackle some tracks we wouldn't usually attempt in bone-stock press vehicles but the Jeep reminded us that it's still the off-road champion.

Triple locking diffs, a disconnecting sway bar and factory fitted BFG muddies are all you could really ask any vehicle manufacturer for, but only one company delivers – the Godfather of the recreational 4x4 – Jeep! The Wrangler always has been and remains the one new vehicle that stays true to the off-road ethos and gives users what they want in a vehicle to take them

anywhere, while having fun all the way.

Add in a removable roof, fold-down windscreen and cool retro styling and the Jeep Wrangler is the ultimate off-road fun truck. Yes, Jeep could give us the bigger tyres as fitted to this model in the USA instead of the puny 255/75R17s that come on Aussie-delivered Rubicons, and we're sure there's something it could do about the near-\$85K price tag, but aside from these gripes the iconic Jeep remains a favourite.

THE LOOK

In keeping with Jeep style, the Wrangler exterior has been refreshed, including the famous seven-slot grille.



WATER FORDING

30"/34"*

OW
73.9/79.3"



LUX FACTOR

Luxury interior boasts a high level of technology, safety and comfort that you would expect for the price.



**THE WRANGLER ALWAYS HAS BEEN AND REMAINS THE ONE
NEW VEHICLE THAT STAYS TRUE TO THE OFF-ROAD ETHOS
AND GIVES USERS WHAT THEY WANT**



NEW GEAR

THE latest updates to the Wrangler Rubicon saw the end of the Pentastar V6 engine and in its place sits a turbocharged four-cylinder petrol mill that outperforms the old V6 in every way.

The Wrangler's new 2.0L four-cylinder turbo-petrol engine produces a claimed 200kW of power and 400Nm of torque compared with the previous V6's claimed peaks of 209kW and 347Nm, and it's that extra torque of the turbo four that makes all the difference in the way the latest Wranglers drive. It's not the peak torque that makes the difference but the broader spread of torque from down low and through the mid range that makes it better to drive both on and off road.

Making life easier for the little-engine-that-could is a superb eight-speed automatic transmission that never seems to put a cog wrong.

When we say that the Rubicon is the off-road champion we're talking about low-range crawling and rock hopping over

gnarly terrain. It's far from an ideal off-road tourer as it's very limited for space and carrying capacity (especially in SWB form) and it's not great for towing a large trailer. The Rubicon is a focused off-roader but it is also heavily loaded with features and premium touches.

Inside, the new dash pad has a soft-touch black material, while a new 12.3-inch panoramic multimedia touchscreen fills the centre of the dash. As well as being bigger than before it includes the latest Uconnect 5 system with wireless Apple and Android phone mirroring.

The Rubicon now gets 12-way power adjustable (driver's only) and heated front leather seats. The rear seat is small but usable and thankfully folds forward to give some semblance of cargo space; when it is in position there is very little space for gear.

ADAPTABLE

To fully enjoy the great outdoors, Wrangler has removable roof panels, hardtop and fold-down windscreen.

NEW TECH

Inside is a new 12.3-inch multimedia touchscreen with Uconnect 5 and Apple and Android smartphone mirroring.





2025 JEEP JL WRANGLER RUBICON

A DEPARTURE ANGLE	37°
B RAMPOVER ANGLE	22.6°
C APPROACH ANGLE	43.9°
D WADING DEPTH	760mm
E GROUND CLEARANCE	255mm

OFF-ROAD ICON

WITH its old-school off-road design and construction, the Wrangler still only achieves a three-star safety rating despite the addition of new side curtain airbags for both front and rear passengers. Other standard safety kit includes rear cross-traffic alert, front and rear cameras, forward collision warning, six airbags and a TPMS.

The interior of the Wrangler has never been quiet but the hardtop helps. To further quieten the cabin, acoustic laminated glass is now used in the front doors of Rubicon models. Speaking of glass, the Wrangler's front windscreen is now made of Gorilla glass; this is the

same heavy-duty glass that's used on Apple iPhones and it's said to be tougher than regular glass, so much so that Jeep warrants the windscreen against damage for two years.

As much as the high level of luxury and tech in the Rubicon is appreciated, and goes some way to justifying the price tag, I wonder if a more affordable model with all of the Rubicon's off-road hardware, but a lower-spec interior and deleted rear seat, would be more popular with 4x4 enthusiasts.

Along with its iconic looks, it's the off-road capability that sets the Rubicon apart from all other new 4x4s. Point it up any piece of challenging track and employ

the diff locks and swaybar disconnect, and the Rubicon feels unstoppable. The rear axle flexes nicely to give plenty of drive through the BFGs, and the swaybar disconnect allows the front axle to match it for articulation.

The short wheelbase makes it easy to poke the little Jeep in between rocks and trees as you negotiate tight trails, but the feeling that you are sitting over the back axle can be a bit uneasy when climbing rock steps on already steep hills. There's an unfounded feeling that with the weight on the rear axle the Wrangler might flip backwards ... but it's a feeling you get used to with time which allows you to fully appreciate the vehicle's abilities.

WB 118.4

JEEP WRANGLER RUBICON 2-DOOR

ENGINE	14 turbocharged petrol
CAPACITY	2.0L
MAX POWER	200kW at 5250rpm
MAX TORQUE	400Nm at 3000 to 4500rpm
TRANSMISSION	8-speed automatic
4X4 SYSTEM	Rock-Trac selectable full-time 4x4 dual range, front and rear diff locks
CRAWL RATIO	77.24:1
CONSTRUCTION	3-door body on ladder frame chassis
FRONT SUSPENSION	Live axle, links, coil springs, disconnecting stabiliser bar
REAR SUSPENSION	Live axle, links, coil springs, stabiliser bar
TYRES	255/75R17
KERB WEIGHT	2219kg
PAYLOAD	620kg
GVM	2574kg
GCM	4819kg
TOWING CAPACITY	2495kg
SEATS	4
FUEL TANK	81L
ADR FUEL CONSUMPTION	9.2L/100km

**MAKING LIFE EASIER FOR THE
LITTLE-ENGINE-THAT-COULD
IS A SUPERB EIGHT-SPEED
AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION
THAT NEVER SEEMS TO PUT A
COG WRONG**

CAPABILITY

Triple locking diffs, disconnecting sway bar and factory fitted BFG muddies will keep the Wrangler mobile on the toughest of tracks.





RUBICON

Rubicon embossed leather seats and exterior decals let everyone know this is no ordinary Wrangler.



SUNNY DAYS

ON-ROAD performance is what you might expect of a vehicle with such great off-road chops; the mud-terrain tyres hum and vibrate on sealed roads, the soft suspension allows for plenty of body roll and the short wheelbase makes it super easy to park, but highway driving is not the Rubicon's forte.

On or off road the Wrangler is best appreciated with the roof off. This can be as simple as removing the two panels over the front-seat occupants which only takes a minute and lets the sun shine in,

or you can remove the entire roof section and drop the windscreen down on to the bonnet, but this takes considerably longer. The first option is quick and easy, and is great for those sunny days in the bush or on the beach.

The Wrangler Rubicon is not the vehicle for everyone but use it for what it was made for and you will be truly rewarded. The off-road ability is unmatched but comes at the expense of on-road comfort and practicality. Keep that in mind when you buy one of these and you won't be disappointed. **4x4**



CUSTOM

TOYOTA LANDCRUISER
60 SERIES





HEART TRANSPLANT

WORDS AND PHOTOS MARK ALLEN

RAISED FROM THE DEAD, THIS LANDCRUISER 60 SERIES NOW RUNS AN ISUZU HEART

WAY back in 1985 Toyota created this FJ62 complete with a four-speed auto and the not-so-mighty 4.0-litre 3F petrol boat anchor that wheezed asthmatic output. Anti-rust prevention was minimal, the suspension was comparable to a cart, the design and looks were basic ... yet it was a rugged wagon that is still loved to this day.

Although this particular 60 Series was more likely than not destined for the graveyard, Adam had other ideas and set about its resurrection, but with a very different route compared to most other restorations.

Minimal fuel use, a comfortable ride, surplus power, some high-tech wizardry and the adoption of some cool old-school paint and panel modifications were to be the order of the day.



HEART TRANSPLANT

NOPE, a thumping petrol V8 wouldn't be transplanted into this old body, nor would a large-capacity Toyota diesel be squeezed between the rails. Rather Adam and James opted for a well-proven, smaller intercooled turbo-diesel engine from an Isuzu D-MAX.

The renowned 4JJ1 3.0-litre engine was chosen for the Cruiser's heart transplant. Even its standard 130kW and 380Nm is a huge leap up from the old Toyota engine (115kW-298Nm), and there are easy aftermarket enhancements to double the outputs, while overall reliability and efficiency, plus the engine's compact size, all make it a great engine transplant for not only this older Cruiser, but many other makes and models.

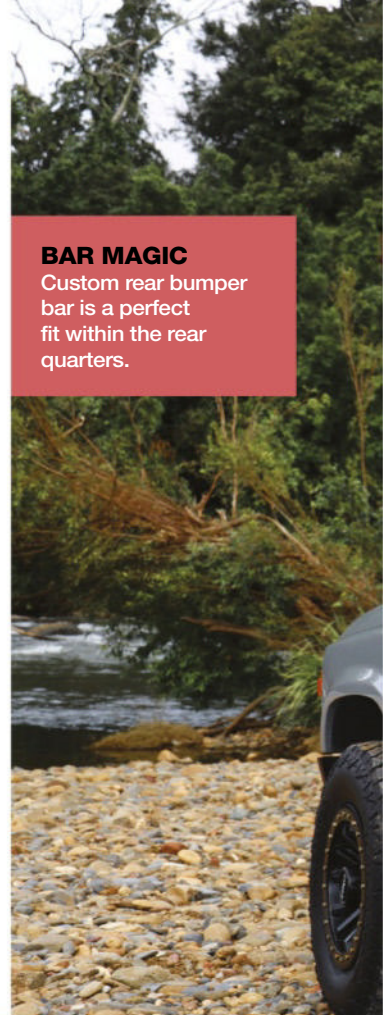
Sacrilege or sanctification for combining a legendary Toyota body with a modern, small-capacity diesel engine? You be the judge. For us, it's a winner all-round, and given the minimal weight variance between the outgoing and incoming engines, it saves a lot of suspension and brake work. A thumbs-up from us.

Adam picked up a complete 2011 D-MAX from the wreckers to make life easier and save some money. Aside from a mild remap to boost performance, Adam reports that the vehicle returns about 9.9L/100km and hauls better than his 4.5-litre 79 Series Cruiser.

Wow! Power, acceleration, driveability and economy all rolled into one. Immaculate conception perhaps?

BAR MAGIC

Custom rear bumper bar is a perfect fit within the rear quarters.



D-MAX BENEFIT

Giving the 60 Series a new lease on life is the 130kW Isuzu 4JJ1 turbo-diesel.





ADAM AND JAMES OPTED FOR A WELL-PROVEN, SMALLER INTERCOOLED TURBO DIESEL ENGINE FROM AN ISUZU D-MAX





FITTING THE ENGINE TO THE CRUISER CHASSIS WAS ACHIEVED BY CUTTING THE D-MAX ENGINE MOUNTS AND GRAFTING TO THE 60 SERIES CHASSIS

REST OF THE DRIVELINE

IT'S all very well having a replacement engine for a project but that's only a small part of the overall plan. The ancillaries, gearbox, transfer case, electrics and physical fitting of the engine and all other components are where the hard work and magic happen.

Adam has managed to keep the Cruiser's four-speed shifter mechanism adapted to the four-speed A340 out of the D-MAX and mated it to a 70 Series transfer case via an Aussie 4j Adaptors housing. A standard 60 Series tail shaft and lovechild of a 60/79 front shaft sends drive to the 60 Series diffs. The 79 transfer lever enters the cabin via the factory transmission tunnel hole.

The standard brake pedal is retained, while the D-MAX drive-by-wire accelerator pedal has been grafted in via custom-fabricated brackets.

Fitting the engine to the Cruiser chassis was achieved by cutting the engine mounts off the Isuzu chassis and grafting to the Toyota chassis. The D-MAX wiring harness is a custom job from Aussie 4j Adaptors, which then blends into the standard Cruiser dash cluster via an unlocked, standard D-MAX engine management system. A JMACX Engineering black powder-coated snorkel feeds air into a 79 Series airbox, which was modified to take the D-MAX MAF sensor. The air-conditioning condenser, power steering pump and various engine-bay piping was all retrieved from the D-MAX and squeezed into the Cruiser. That's a huge reason to purchase a complete donor vehicle rather than just an engine and 'box for transformations like this. The myriad of large and small parts that can be used saves time and money.

PROTECTION

Guarding the sills, custom side steps double as rock sliders.



Many brackets and parts, like the steel fan shroud, have been custom fabricated on the run to keep the conversion safe and legal.

A set of 285/70R17 Predator New Mutant X-AT tyres have been wrapped around 17x9 ROH Zullo alloy rims. The leaf-spring packs have had an extra leaf installed for a little more carrying capacity yet maintain as much comfort as a leaf-sprung 4x4 can offer. The rears also feature Boss airbags to cater for varying loads, plus both ends score EFS shock absorbers.

Stedi LED headlights are an excellent replacement for the standard glow-in-the-dark-style candles. A Carbon synthetic rope winch, with its control box relocated under the bonnet, gives a neat, clutter-free, minimalist front end. The only hint of there being a winch is the fairlead with hook, plus the slight protrusion of the clutch engagement handle.



SIDE ACCESS

Emuwing flip-up side windows provide easy access to the rear.



1. New Mutant Predators wrapped around ROH Zullo alloys.

2. Stedi LED lights make a huge difference to night-time driving.

3. An extra leaf in the pack plus EFS shocks sees a modest lift and excellent driveability.

ORIGINAL

Neat as a pin (almost) standard interior.



1. Where would we be without an OE fall-over gauge?
2. A hint to what is under the bonnet.
3. Nope, no locks. All have been deleted in favour of remote central locking.



PANEL WORK

CASUAL glances by the untrained eye will only see a standard 60 Series Cruiser. Normal, but clean and tidy.

Those in the know will spend much time picking both small and large discrepancies from the original body. The obvious is the 79 Series bonnet scoop, which offers the only telltale of an engine swap via the letterbox opening, where you can spy the chromed Isuzu 3.0 badging.

All door locks, fuel flap lock, rear wiper and washer, and antennas have been eliminated, resulting in clean, smoothed-out panel work. Access is gained via factory central-locking actuators combined with a Viper remote central-locking system. A Mitsubishi Triton fuel-flap release mechanism has also been grafted into the inside of the fuel flap to

access the fuel filler.

The front quarter panels have been chopped to allow for the customised McKinnon's Cruisers bullbar, which gives a modernised OE appearance. Adam knocked up custom side steps/rock sliders to protect the sills and a rear bar to protect the Cruiser's trailing end, both of which look perfectly modern on the old Cruiser body. It's a great blend of classical heritage and modern design cues.

A Rhino-Rack roof platform sits atop custom roof-rack gutter mounts, finishing off the exterior of what appears to be a brilliant custom and perfectly usable touring 4x4.

A pair of rear side-opening Emuwing Gullwing glass windows provide easy access to the Cruiser's rear



WHO IS HE?

Adam Kelly is the brains behind YouTube channel *STS Garage* and his family-oriented YouTube channel *Smart Touring Systems*. Aside from travel and product videos, he's created an 18-part series on the build of Lazarus, the 60 Series Cruiser, so head on over for a few hours of screen time.

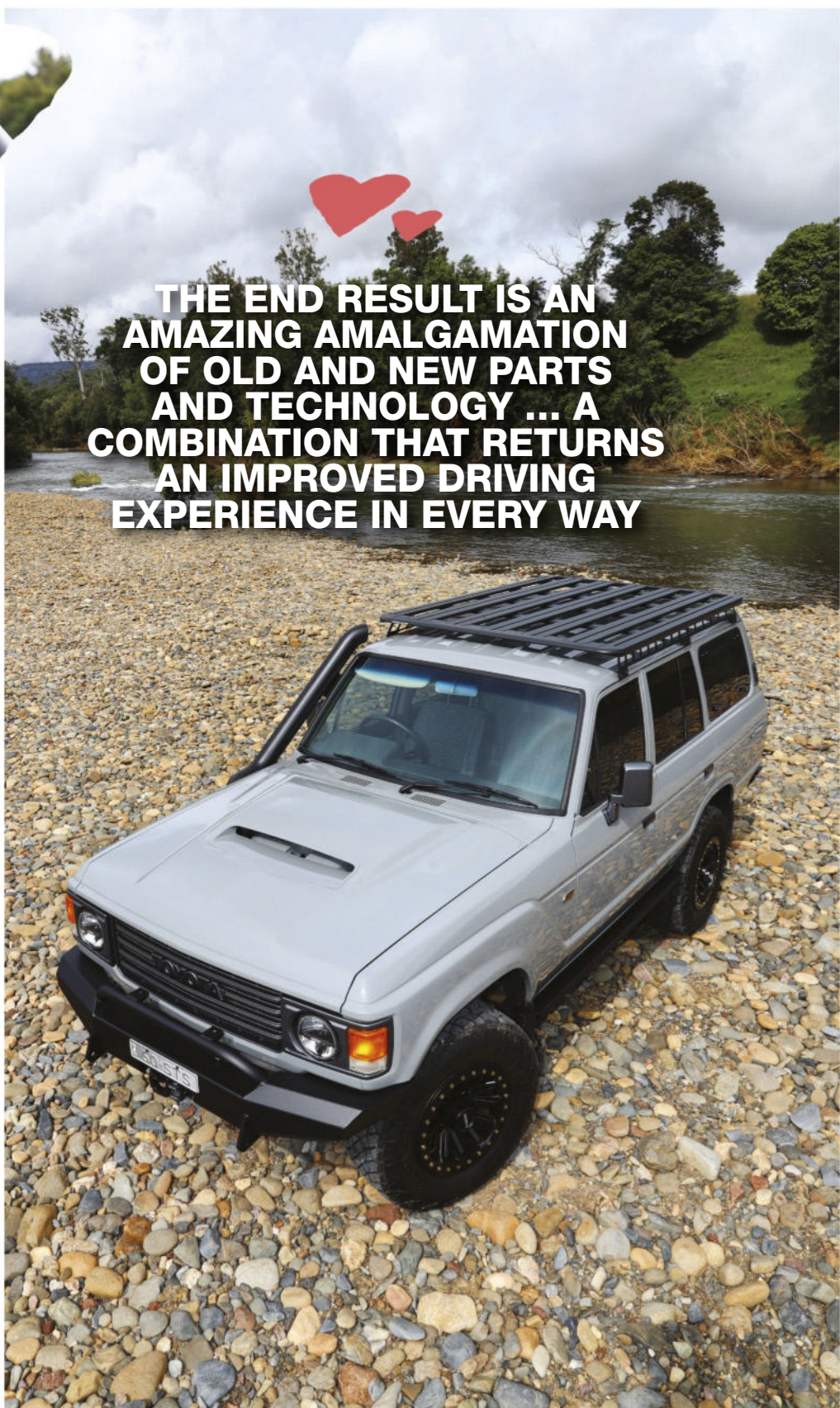
There are also plenty of other projects, including a 40 Series, 79 Series, and 3F 60 Series Cruiser with an eBay turbo, plus a new GQ Patrol project.

Adam has a healthy list of people to thank for the rebirth of this Ol' Cruiser: his wife Megan, co-host James, Jas for the lick of colour, Tim for the window tinting, Michael from Aussie 4j Adaptors, and his sponsors All Four x 4 Spares, Bisley, Emuwing, The Wheel Deal and ROH.

luggage compartment.

The final touches of Skoda grey have been applied to a meticulously prepared body, albeit after a lot of rust removal. Colour-coded finishing touches to the engine cover, plus custom dark gunmetal grey to the Toyota grille perfectly finish the project, making it a true one-of-a-kind standout vehicle. So stand out, in fact, that it scored best modified 60 Series at the recent Classic Landcruiser Expo & Car Show (CLECS) in Queensland.

The end result is an amazing amalgamation of old and new parts and technology ... a combination that returns an improved driving experience in every way to that of the old. It is a head-turning custom body that has been a labour of love for Adam and not possible without James. 



THE END RESULT IS AN AMAZING AMALGAMATION OF OLD AND NEW PARTS AND TECHNOLOGY ... A COMBINATION THAT RETURNS AN IMPROVED DRIVING EXPERIENCE IN EVERY WAY

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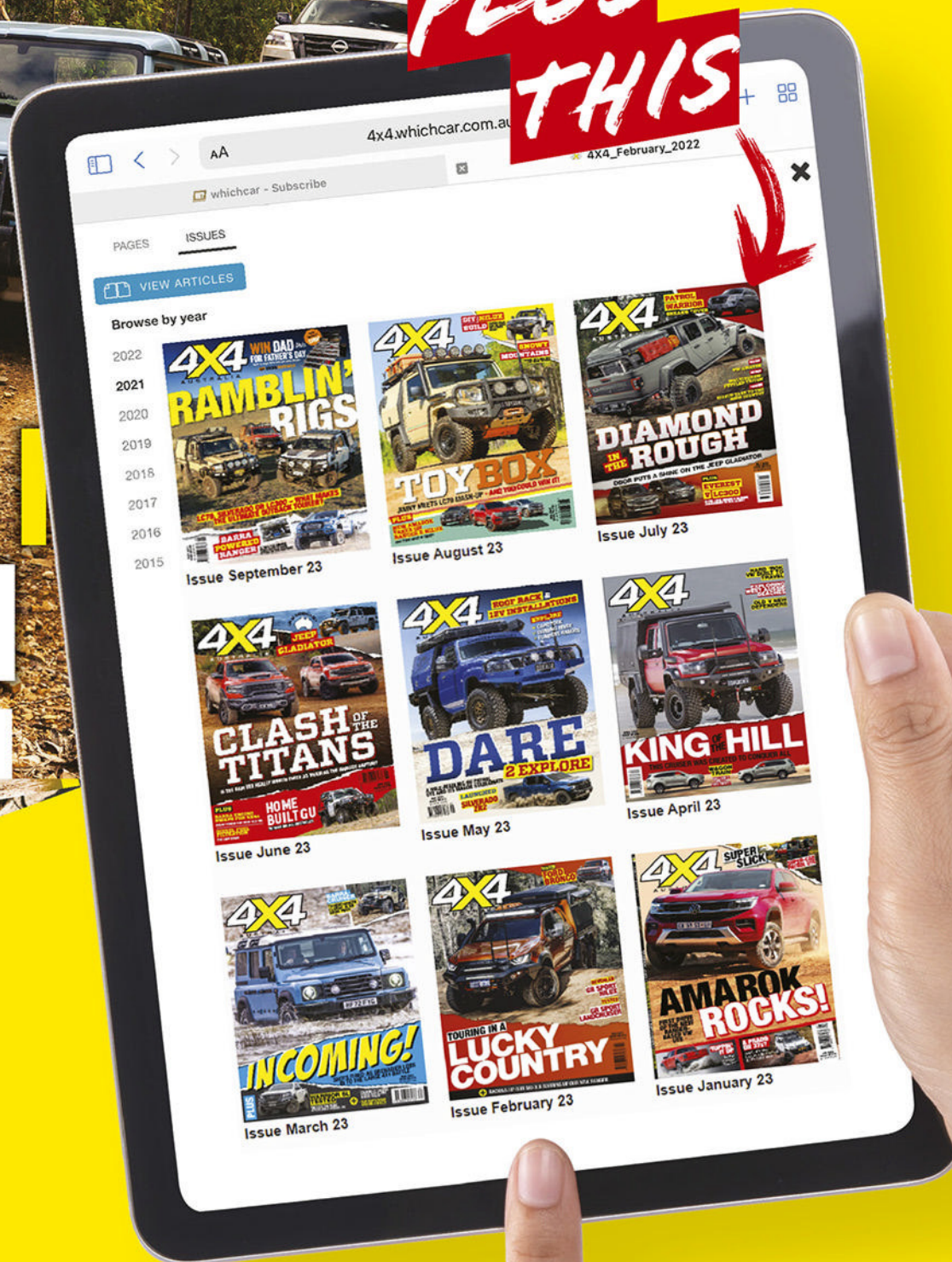
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IN LEICHHARDT'S FOOTSTEPS

Journeying across the far reaches of Queensland and the Northern Territory, the route of Leichhardt's 1844 expedition is an interesting and challenging trip, even today

WORDS AND PHOTOS RON AND VIV MOON

WE THUMPED into a narrow erosion gully. The Cruiser's engine growled and the suspension flexed as we clambered out of a sharp-edged gutter. Minutes earlier, the tall, thick grass had hidden all sorts of obstacles as we pushed through. Now, it had given way to shorter, drier pasture, cut by clefts left from recent floods that had drowned the Gulf Country plains under more than a metre of water. An expansive sea of drying grass, sprinkled with spindly trees and scrubs, cut here and there by still running streams, was interspersed with pools and lagoons dotting the surrounding area.

In front of us, leading us through the maze of broken ground and confused waterways, was the local station manager on his Honda trail bike, zigzagging his way

to our hard-to-find goal. While previously mustering cattle, Carl had flown over the remote monument we were looking for, but he had never reached our objective by vehicle. Nevertheless, his knowledge and memory of the country was near photographic, and his insight was bringing our four-day search to a fitting climax.

We were mere metres away from the small monument before we saw it, the four star-pickets weathered by nearly 40 years of tropical storms and dry seasons, almost invisible amongst the grass and scrawny scrub. It gives added testimony, if we hadn't already realised, how difficult it is to find an isolated marker in this seemingly immeasurable landscape, even when you have been given some old map grid references and GPS points to help lead you to the spot.





GARIG GUNAK BARTU NP



IN LEICHHARDT'S FOOTSTEPS

OUR journey, closely following the 1844-45 Leichhardt expedition's route, had started a few weeks earlier north of Dalby in south-east Queensland. Leichhardt and his small party consisted of five white men – including John Gilbert who was 2IC to Leichhardt and the only one of the party with any experience in the bush – along with a Black man and two Aborigines. With a few bullocks and 17 horses, the party left the recently established Jimbour homestead, then the outer limits of European settlement in southern Queensland, in October 1844.

It was a grand plan, done on the cheap with little government help or money, to march overland to the far distant outpost – the only one on the north coast of Australia at that time – at Port Essington and the small isolated settlement of Victoria.

THE MAIN ROUTE ACROSS THE GULF TODAY PARALLELS LEICHHARDT'S TRACK WHICH IS GENERALLY A LITTLE CLOSER TO THE COAST

The original six months travel time blew out to 15 months, and it was a bedraggled group that staggered into Victoria on December 17, 1845. It says much of Leichhardt's leadership that only one man died during that time and none of his party suffered from scurvy, the scourge of early explorers and sailors.

We had it much easier on our expedition, following in Leichhardt's wake. After leaving the stately Jimbour homestead and the rich farmland of the Darling Downs, our small group pushed into varied and spectacular country. We crossed

sweeping plains, where solitary peaks rose from the surrounding flat landscape, and wound our way into the rugged gorges of the Expedition Range. Elsewhere, we crossed rivers and streams such as the mighty Burdekin River below the great dam that has tamed its annual wet season torrent; but only just a little!

After investigating the verdant tropical range country in and around Leichhardt's Valley of Lagoons, we followed the Lynd River to where it joined the large, wide and mighty Mitchell River that cuts across the base of Cape York Peninsula. Many years ago, when the crocs weren't as plentiful or as big as they are today, I had paddled this river from near its source to where Gamboola Station is located today, but this trip was to take us further downstream and on to two of the vast cattle stations that straddle this often violent and powerful river.



Closer to the river's headwaters we cross the Burdekin once more.



One of our party crosses below the great cement wall of the Burdekin dam.

Viv Moon enjoys the view from our camp overlooking the Robinson River on Seven Emu Station.



GILBERT'S GRAVE

SEEKING permission to travel across these company-owned properties had been a challenge in itself, but the rewards were justified as we stood around the rough monument that marks (or is close, at least) the final resting place of John Gilbert, the great naturalist and collector of Australian fauna and flora, who lost his life here in June 1845 when Leichhardt's party and their camp were attacked by a group of Aborigines.

The grave, as we indicated earlier, may not be where the little monument can be found – in fact, it could be anywhere in the surrounding area – but it is probably the best we modern explorers can expect.

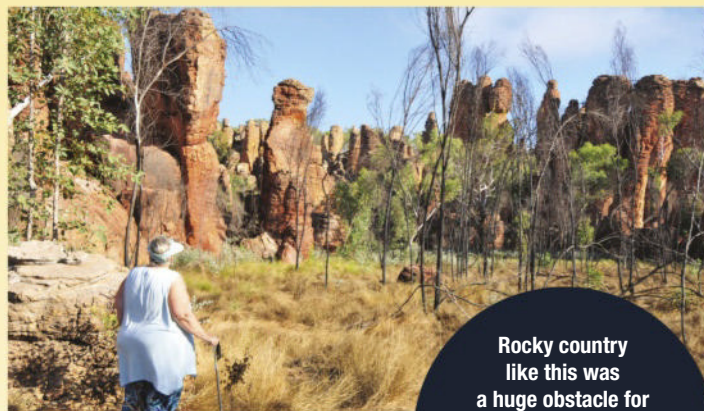
Back in 1985 an Army adventure training group helped Professor B Dalton from James Cook University, an expert on Leichhardt, locate the possible gravesite, their investigations strengthened by the

use of a caesium magnetometer. Then, in the early 1990s, Glen McLaren, who subsequently gained a PhD for his work, retraced Leichhardt's track, much of it on horseback or on a motorcycle, and recorded many of the campsites of the Leichhardt party, including the camp where Gilbert was killed. As a result, there is some discrepancy between McLaren's and Dalton's position for the site.

As a monument erected by the Army exists, it has become the de facto position whether correct or not. And adding influence is a slab of white marble (most obvious from the air) and a plaque added to the base of the Army's monument by the Eacham Historical Society in 1999. Looking at the worn and tattered visitor's book, only a handful of people have been to this lonely spot in the past 40 years ... and we were bloody pleased to have made it here!



**IT SAYS MUCH OF
LEICHHARDT'S
LEADERSHIP THAT
ONLY ONE MAN DIED
DURING THAT TIME
AND NONE OF HIS
PARTY SUFFERED
FROM SCURVY**



Rocky country like this was a huge obstacle for Leichhardt and his men as he entered what we know as Arnhem land. Viv admires the scenery.

Exploring around the Chillagoe area offers some great tracks.





Travellers enjoy the water at Leichhardt Falls, the falls taking its name from the river named by a later expedition.

TALL TALES AND TRUE

THE next day, with our success behind us, we headed south to Normanton and then west around the Gulf of Carpentaria, stopping for a night at the spectacular Leichhardt Falls. This is pretty much on the Gulf tourist circuit these days and we shared the area around the falls and the gorge downstream with a mix of swags, camper trailers and off-road vans. Leichhardt's party had crossed downstream of the falls but had failed to name the river; that was left to AC Gregory in 1856.

The main route across the Gulf today parallels Leichhardt's track which is generally a little closer to the coast, and in an effort to experience the country he traversed we headed on to Seven Emu Station. This vast property, owned by Frank Shadforth and his family, who are Garawa people from the Gulf Country, has been opened in part to adventurous travellers. Seven Emu is on traditional Aboriginal lands but Willie Shadforth, a cattle drover and horse trader, worked hard, saved hard, got lucky and bought the station outright – for cash! – in 1953.

He was one of the first Aboriginals to buy a pastoral lease and he later passed the property to his son, and in turn Frank has now handed the management of the property to his son Clarry, who, with his sons, runs the property.

We camped here for a few days not far from where the Leichhardt party had crossed the major stream of the Robinson River, and it was while yarning with Frank that I found out about the naming of Seven Emu Station. Originally I had thought it had something to do with an Aboriginal dreamtime story, but Frank set me straight: "Nah, it was that bloke Leichhardt," he said with a twinkle in his eyes. "I was speaking with him back a while, and he named the river just down the hill from here Seven Emu after his men had killed seven emus and they'd had a big feed." I believed most of Frank's story!

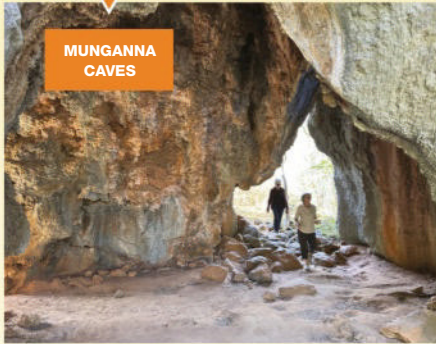
A few days later we bid farewell to the flatness of the Gulf Country and found ourselves amongst the rock spires of the Southern Lost City – to distinguish it from the Western Lost

City, both in the Limmen NP to the west, or the Lost City quite a distance to the south and outside the park. I couldn't help but think that they could come up with some better names for these labyrinths of stone. A nearby camping area, damaged by a burn-off that got away from the fire-management team when we were there, makes for an ideal spot to explore the rock towers. A short walking trail, much of it in shade in the cool of the early morning, was a delight with birds twittering and clouds of butterflies sparkling like diamonds.

Later we crossed the mighty Roper River at Roper Bar, the rocky crossing that Leichhardt had used to get his party across this major stream and into the morass of rock and escarpments that we know as Arnhem Land and Kakadu. Just up the bank from the crossing, in the overgrown yards of the old police post, is a monument to Leichhardt and his men. This one was a bit of a surprise find, but it was just one of a number we had stumbled across on our travels in the footsteps of this famed and often controversial explorer.

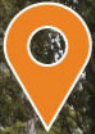


MUNGANNA
CAVES



Frank Shadforth, owner
and TO of Seven Emu
Station shares a joke with
the author.

**SEEKING
PERMISSION
TO TRAVEL
ACROSS THESE
COMPANY-
OWNED
PROPERTIES
HAD BEEN A
CHALLENGE
IN ITSELF, BUT
THE REWARDS
WERE
JUSTIFIED
AS WE STOOD
AROUND
THE ROUGH
MONUMENT**



EXPEDITION
NP



A sandy track gives access to a long section of coast on Seven Emu Station.

AFTER A DAY OF TAKING IT EASY WE BOARDED A BOAT FOR A FAST TRIP ACROSS PORT ESSINGTON TO THE RUINS OF VICTORIA

JOURNEY'S END

FROM Kakadu, the last leg of our adventure began as we drove across the infamous Cahill Crossing which separates the national park from the vastness of Arnhem Land. Our timing for the tide was perfect and we hardly got our wheels wet as we forded this major stream, once again close to Leichhardt's track.

Today's route to Garig Gunak Barlu NP closely follows the explorer's footprints, especially where the neck of land narrows before coming on to the Cobourg Peninsula. We followed the road to Black Point and its camping area and nearby ranger base where we set up our little camp for a few days.

After a day of taking it easy we boarded a boat for a fast trip across Port Essington to the ruins of Victoria;

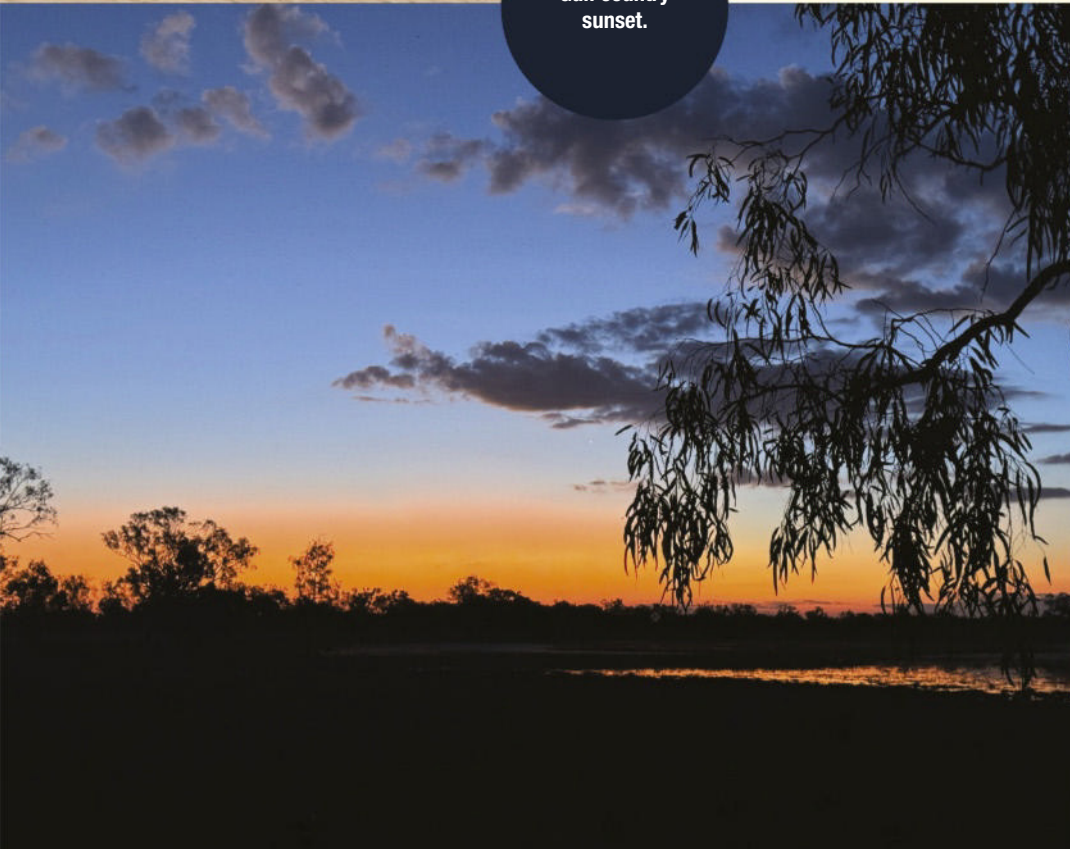
this is the only way modern travellers are allowed to access this historic site. Surprisingly, there are more ruins to see than you'd first imagine, with the old officer's married quarters being the most prominent and photographed of all the buildings that once stood here. Leichhardt would have walked along this line of buildings during his month-long stay at Victoria and while walking past these still standing ruins I couldn't help but wonder at his achievements ... and the irony of the rich country he had opened up for pioneer settlers to follow, while the one place that marked civilisation in his days is now slipping quietly back to nature.

Leichhardt returned to Sydney and a couple of years later set out on his second and then third expeditions. He and his party vanished though on his third trip into the interior; maybe that'll make a good basis for our next expedition. **44**

The rocky country of Arnhem Land was a challenge for Leichhardt's party – today it is a fabulous tourist attraction as the author can testify.



Gulf country
sunset.



GULF COUNTRY, QLD & NT FAST FACTS

MAP OF LEICHHARDT'S ROUTE:

adb.anu.edu.au/entity/8843

JIMBOUR STATION:

www.jimbour.com

SEVEN EMU STATION:

sevenemustation.com.au

LIMMEN NP:

nt.gov.au/parks/find-a-park/limmen-national-park

GARIG GUNAK BARLU NP:

nt.gov.au/parks/find-a-park/garig-gunak-barlu-national-park

Boat trip to Victoria: venturenorth.com.au

LEICHHARDT LITERATURE

Leichhardt's book on the expedition:
gutenberg.net.au/ebooks/e00030.html

Into the Unknown by John Bailey is a good read of Leichhardt's life and first expedition

Glen McLaren also wrote a book on his findings in relation to Leichhardt called *Beyond Leichhardt: Bushcraft and the Exploration of Australia*

The definitive book on the disappearance of Leichhardt was written by Darrell Lewis and is titled *Where is Dr Leichhardt? The greatest mystery in Australian history*



WORDS AND PHOTOS KEV SMITH

MALLEE MAGIC

**THE
MALLEE
COUNTRY OF
WYPERFELD NATIONAL
PARK OFFERS A
FABULOUS MIX OF
HISTORY, STUNNING
SCENERY, BEAUT
CAMPING AND FUN
SAND DRIVING**



HAD just completed the iconic Border Track that defines Victoria and South Australia when I saw a turnoff to Wyperfeld NP. Not one to miss an adventure, I soon found myself heading to the park.

Wyperfeld is the third largest NP in Victoria broken up into three different management areas to protect its fragile Mallee country, indigenous heritage and European history. Covering a staggering 3570km², it was first reserved in 1909 but to protect and manage the area it was declared in 1921. The Wotjobaluk people have called Wyperfeld home for many generations and there are signs throughout the park where artefacts, middens and burial sites have been found, and are now protected.

Broken into three distinct areas, Wyperfeld has a very special feel depending on which section you are exploring.

To the west, there is the Big Desert Wilderness area that is only accessible to experienced hikers. At just over 1450km² between the Border track and the Murrayville Track, this is one of the least



disturbed areas in Victoria.

To the north, a pocket of land called State Forest has a maze of sandy 4x4 tracks and camping areas to explore. Through this area, three main dedicated 4x4 routes allow you to explore different areas with various POIs along the way. It features stands of red gums, pines and casuarinas to low heathland vegetation and even steep dunes where the sand can be softer than a beach drive.

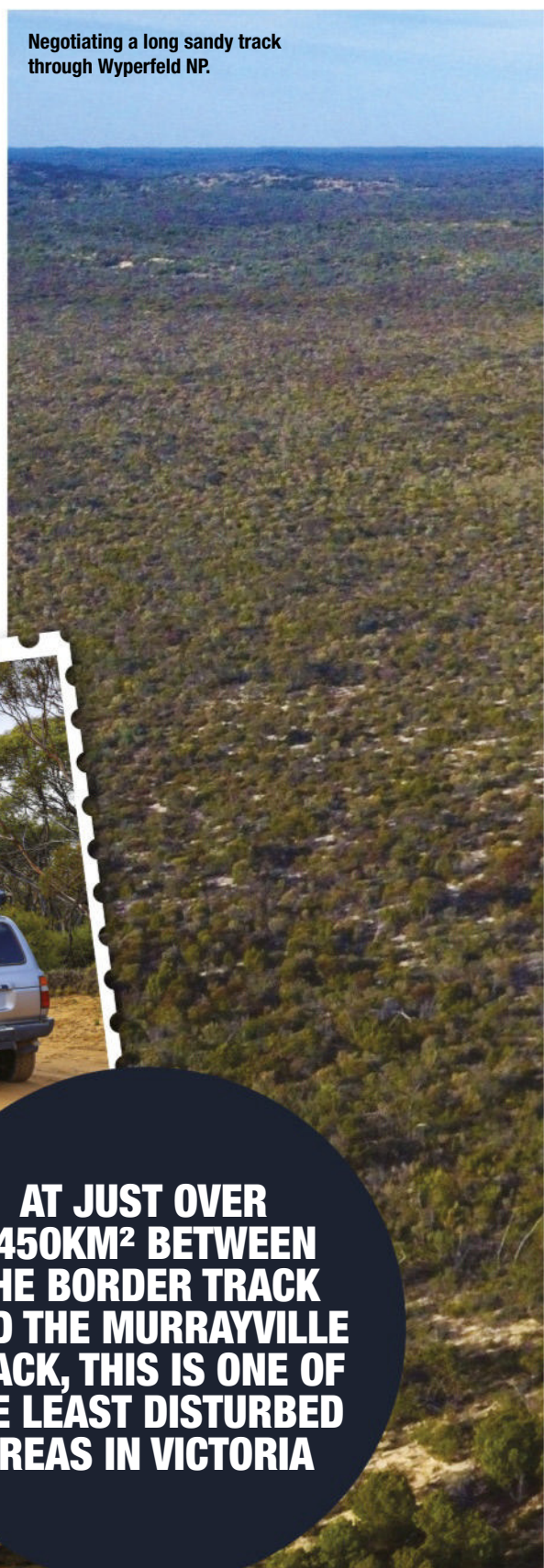
The hardest track through this section of the park is the Milmed Rock Track which runs for 175km through some of the softest and steepest sand I've ever encountered. It's a good seven-hour drive on the loop, with two separate campgrounds along the way, some old water springs and the Milmed Rock formation.

The Nhill-Murrayville Track cuts

between the Wilderness area and Wyperfeld NP for its entire length of nearly 80km. Classed as a 4x4 track, today it's a well-maintained dirt road when dry but signs warn that when wet it gets very slippery. This track was put through back in 1860 when cattlemen walked stock between Nhill Station and Kow Plains Station and it was only suitable for wagons until it was upgraded in 1936. Bores were sunk along its length with windmills and tanks built for passing stock, and many of these can still be found beside the track.

There are three major campgrounds along the way – Big Billy, Stockman Camp and Broken Bucket. Big Billy was established in the 1800s for the stockman and today it's a popular camp spot with facilities including toilets and a shelter with heaps of information about the park, plus there's a short walk to a viewing

Negotiating a long sandy track through Wyperfeld NP.



AT JUST OVER 1450KM² BETWEEN THE BORDER TRACK AND THE MURRAYVILLE TRACK, THIS IS ONE OF THE LEAST DISTURBED AREAS IN VICTORIA





A morning fog drapes
the NP's lowlands.

**THE SNOWDRIFT
CAMPING AREA
IS THE BEST IN THE
PARK WITH A MASSIVE
DUNE ACTING AS THE
BACKDROP**

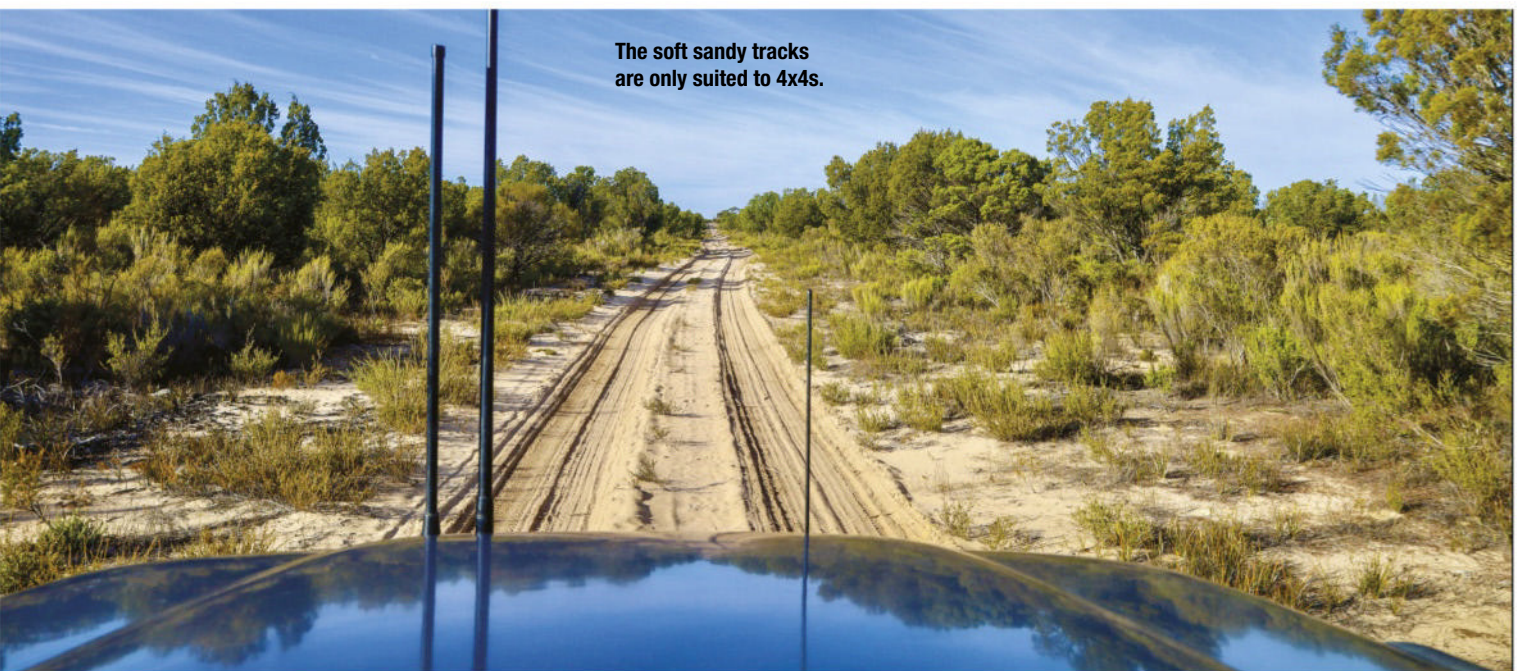
point across the stunning Mallee country, which is a great place for an afternoon drink as the sun goes down.

For many years European settlers stayed away from the area because of the sandy infertile soils and low rainfall which allowed the native animals and plants to thrive here as the land wasn't cleared. There are an estimated 200 bird species that have been spotted in the park along with a large selection of reptiles, but surprisingly snakes are rarely seen throughout the park.

Wyperfeld is known for its dunes, with nearby areas called The Big and Little Deserts. Records date the dunes to be around 40,000 years old. After the shallow sea retreated from the area more than 25 million years ago, the westerly winds blew the sand across the inland areas creating

what's left today. There are lakes through and around Wyperfeld that are connected by Outlet Creek which eventually spills into Lake Hindmarsh to the south; this is Victoria's largest inland freshwater lake. When the rains come the park transforms from a semi-arid landscape into mats of colour as the patiently waiting dormant seeds germinate.

The eastern section of Wyperfeld has more heath lowland where shallow lakes that are dry for many years are lined with huge red gums, native wattles, casuarinas and cypress pines. The Snowdrift Camping Area is the best in the park with a massive dune acting as the backdrop, and facilities including huge camping areas, firepits and toilets. Climbing the soft sand is an effort but the views across all areas of the park are worth the effort. The sunrise with a low fog gives an eerie feeling to the start of the day and the stunning sunsets are



magical as the last rays shine across the park.

An hour to the south of Snowdrift, the more formal Wonga camping area is 2WD accessible from the south, but also a great base to set out from in a 4x4. Wonga has several walking trails for those inclined for a wander and there's a 15km circuit drive around Lake Brimin with signs revealing insights into the Mallee treasures along the way.

In 1855 the original Pine Plains Station covered 180km² but seven years later the station was split into two different sections. Wonga Lake Station occupied the southern area, and today there is a replica hut which was built in 1934 and offers shelter for visitors in bad weather. Across



Just north of Wyperfeld NP you'll find the mallee town of Underbool and its heritage railway yard and silos.

**FOR MANY YEARS
EUROPEAN SETTLERS
STAYED AWAY FROM THE
AREA BECAUSE OF THE SANDY
INFERTILE SOILS AND LOW
RAINFALL WHICH ALLOWED
THE NATIVE ANIMALS AND
PLANTS TO THRIVE**

Sunset over the
pristine mallee country
of Wyperfeld.





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*Compared to equivalent flooded lead acid battery.

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the paddock, Parks Victoria has built a huge information centre where visitors can wile away time reading and viewing cultural, pastoral and other important history relevant to the park and local area. There is a restored whim here – the original, built in 1865, would have a horse harnessed to one side and as it walked its a circular path it would draw a bucket up from the well.

From Wonga, the Freeway Track heads north towards the outer reaches of the park, and is only suitable for high-clearance 4x4s, and definitely no towing through the soft sand. Parks Victoria recommends you monitor UHF channel 16 if travelling this road. Along

the way, old rabbitohs camps have been restored; these were established when a rabbit plague hit the area in 1873, and many people made a living from culling these feral pests instead of grazing sheep. Numerous huts were scattered across the mallee landscape and today, with the help of different organisations, one has been preserved along with memorabilia that lines the inside of the tin hut.

Wyperfeld NP really took me by surprise; it has an amazing history, contains beautiful mallee country, has some excellent sand driving and some of the best campsites I've visited for a long time. 



WYPERFELD NP TRAVEL PLANNER

ABOUT

Wyperfeld NP is a unique area that blends a Wilderness Park and State Forest, and covers a huge mallee area throughout which there are many old stock routes. Situated on the Vic-SA border in the northwestern corner of Victoria, Wyperfeld covers 3570km² of protected semi-arid mallee country, around 450km NW of Melbourne. The third largest NP in Victoria, it's known for its birdlife like the remarkable mound-building malleefowl.

WHAT TO SEE AND DO

Wyperfeld is secluded with 4x4 tracks and remote walking trails. There are plenty of camping areas with the opportunity to spot birdlife and see wildflowers after good rains. The park's European history dates back to the mid-1880s when stock was walked through here. Old stock camps and challenging 4x4 tracks are attractions. Beautiful and remote camping spots with varying aspects, include: Snowdrift below a massive sand blow with stunning views from the top, Big Billy is in the heart of Wyperfeld, while Stockman Camp and Broken Bucket are old watering sites for passing livestock.

OTHER INFORMATION

Murrayville, 33km to the north, and Horsham 110km to the south, are the two closest towns for supplies. There are signs with info and maps at the park's entry, but download the Vic Gov's 'More to Explore' app to also access interactive maps. Summers can be extremely hot and dry with the risk of fires, while winters are very cold. Mid-spring and autumn are the best times to visit.

DON'T JUST SETTLE
FOR THE SAME OLD
BULL



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NEXT GEN
(FULL BULLBAR)

DON'T GET BOXED IN WITH OUTDATED DESIGNS

4X4 • HOW TO
AUSTRALIA

SURVIVING SAND

DICK EUSSEN HAS BEEN DRIVING ON SANDY TRACKS AND BEACHES SINCE A LAND ROVER IIA WAS THE 4X4 TO HAVE, AND IN THAT TIME HE'S LEARNED A THING OR TWO. HERE ARE HIS TIPS FOR SAND DRIVING



WORDS AND PHOTOS DICK EUSSEN

ALL TOO often we hear folks talking about their new 4x4 and say it will mainly see on-road use with maybe an easy beach drive on occasion. It's as if driving on a beach is easy but, in reality, you're more likely to get bogged in sand than in any other off-road conditions, and you're more likely to lose that new 4x4 to an incoming tide than from some off-road incident out in the bush.

I love heading out bush, even on short trips to a mate's place to boil the billy or pass Lakelands, south of Cooktown, to cast lures for barra and sooty grunters in the Laura and Normanby rivers. But it's the country north of Cooktown on the Starkey Track where off-road adventure begins; sand dunes and rutted sandy and windy bulldust tracks that

terminate at amazing fishing spots.

It's the gateway to the Cape and the Northern Gulf. A mate and I often go on a day trip by getting an early start, though mostly we make the most of the escape and camp for a night or more, sitting around a friendly campfire under a starry sky, listening to howling dingoes.

But a trip can go wrong in seconds unless one is aware and prepared for the pitfalls, bogs, slashed tyres and other unforeseen events. It's all about preparation and driving to the conditions, something I have been doing for decades in my quest for adventures. Allow me to provide you with some handy bush-driving skills that have been part of my life.



BEACHES AND DUNES

WE all tend to drive overloaded vehicles. I run the Toyo A/T tyres on my HiLux at 40psi on bitumen and 36psi on hard dirt roads, but let them down to 12psi on sand dunes. Corrugated roads are best done at 30psi.

When driving in soft sand, highly inflated tyres will get you bogged before you get started, and while some drivers reckon that wide tyres are better they actually push up more sand in front of the tyres and increase the risk of sticks and stones damaging bulging sidewalls. Don't be fooled that tyres with low air-pressures will 'roll' over obstacles without being damaged because they 'flex' better; the vulnerable sidewalls are exposed at low pressures.

Setting the correct tyre pressure will depend on the weight of the vehicle and the terrain. Some sand, especially on damp beaches, tends to be hard. Always drive on the tidal section of a beach, not on the soft sand above it, because that is where birds and turtles lay their eggs.

Soft sand will bog a 4x4, but getting stuck can be largely avoided by lowering tyre pressures down to 16psi or lower. Deflated tyres can roll off the rims when cornering or from hitting an obstacle, so slow down to crawl-speed to avoid popping a tyre off the rim. If you have a flat on a beach, changing

the wheel on an incoming tide is risky. Drive as high as possible above the high tide mark when doing so.

The headlands of many beaches are rocky and driving on aired-down tyres could result in a shredded sidewall from sharp rocks. Even smooth rocks can cause tyre damage. It's wise to pump tyres up on long rocky beach sections to minimise the chance of sidewall damage.

Many beaches have springs and running creeks that wash out deep holes. If you happen to run into one it can be hard yakka getting your 4x4 out. I know a former commercial fisherman who lost his trayback when he ran into a spring hole on a beach north of Pormpuraaw – the vehicle has now rusted away ...

Dunes are tricky and often too steep to traverse because of fine deep sand. Wide, aired-down tyres and speed are best for dunes, but be slow on the crest if you don't know what is on the other side of it. Drive over one too fast and you may launch into space. Be careful on unstable slopes, especially if the vehicle loses traction and drifts down it, trapped in a fine sand avalanche. Trying to turn when this happens may result in a roll over on a steep slope. Be careful braking; instead, let the natural friction of the sand and its suction to control stops.



REMEMBER

Tyre and rim damage can happen even when driving in sand.

DUNE TRAPS

Many tropical dune fields have shallow creeks, but some are boggy.



QUALITY PUMP

A decent air compressor is a must for sand drivers.



GOING EARLY

Bush tracks on the Cape York Peninsula are far from easy until the dry proper sets in; early trips often mean traversing bogs.

Something to remember is that as with the sand on beaches and dunes, bulldust is firmer in the morning, or when damp from a shower

BUSH TRACKS

THE bush tracks through monsoon woodlands turn from corrugation in the early stages of the dry season to bulldust or heavy sand at the end of it. The bulldust is very capable of dry bogging vehicles. When traversing such tracks it's best to air down to half the pressure of your sealed-road pressures.

Unlike beach driving, it's impossible to get any speed up on winding, timber-lined and sandy bush tracks. Use low range, third gear when conditions demand it. The problem is that sand sucks tyres in; just stop to see how it piles up about the wheels. This increases drag, and the wider the footprint the more drag. Speed will get you through most patches, but as bush tracks often have deep potholes and washouts, take care when doing so.

If you don't air down you can get dry bogged in this stuff when your vehicle progressively slows down and runs out of power. I have aired-down and still got bogged down because I was towing a heavy boat trailer. You must lower trailer tyre pressures also.

Avoid using the brakes and rely on the gears. Lock auto transmissions in the preferred gear and mode before entering sandy sections, not after you are bogged and need a winch or the recovery boards to get you out.

Bulldust worries newcomers, but it won't bog you unless you hit a deep hole and are hung up with the vehicle sitting firm and flush on the hard centre and the wheels

unable to grip on a soft bottom. It's rare but it happens, especially after a road-train convoy has gone over it. The fine talcum-powder-like dust penetrates everything; a good reason to turn up the air-con to full bore when entering a long stretch. Use the windscreen wipers when it splashes over the bonnet ... and it will.

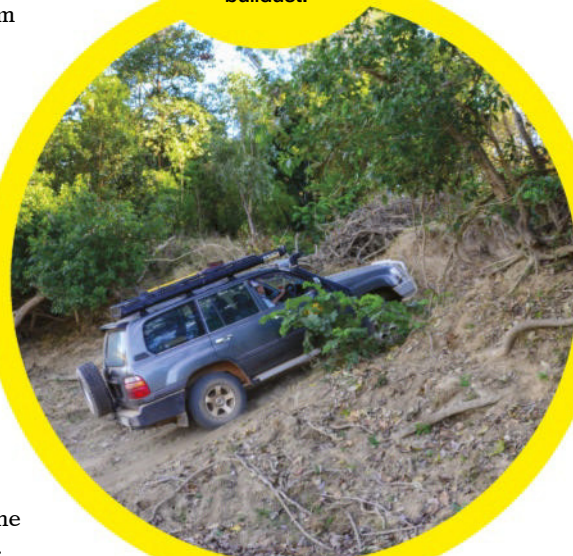
Something to remember is that as with the sand on beaches and dunes, bulldust is firmer in the morning, or when damp from a shower. The same applies to beach sand which is best driven over on a receding tide.

Bush tracks often hide exposed roots, rocks and even fallen trees that are covered in sand or bulldust. Keep an eye open for them or it may mean suspension damage or a tyre change, an unpleasant job in bulldust.

Take care on dirt and gravel roads where gravel is piled up in the centre. Be wary when changing 'lanes' at speed because the vehicle will fish-tail and roll, which is almost guaranteed if you are towing a trailer/van when it crosses the centre pile. Many such roll-overs happen on the Cape's Peninsula Developmental Road, with most drivers having no clue what happened. The same occurs when driving on low-pressure tyres and taking corners at 100km/h, and the rubber rolls off the rim. Game over ...

DRY STREAMS

Steep, dusty stream beds are challenging in the latter part of the dry season when they turn to bulldust.





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GEAR YOU'LL NEED

Carry recovery gear when heading into the wilderness. It starts with a reliable air compressor; buy the best you can afford, not a \$30 special as it won't pump up large 4x4 tyres. You will need a tyre gauge and deflator set.

A winch is handy, but you can spend a lifetime in the bush and never use one. I carry a 50-year-old Tirfor hand winch that has seen some heavy work. Backing the winch is a recovery kit, including an extra 10,000lb breaking strain snatch strap. I carry two and have used both to recover vehicles.

What applies to winches applies to MaxTrax recovery boards, but when you do need them they are invaluable. They are not that heavy and are easy to store and carry. A spare 10t hydraulic jack lives in my tool kit. It's used for changing tyres instead of the Toyota jack. Have a long-handled shovel. Avoid trench shovels; they are only good for a walk in the scrub with a toilet roll.

A few days back, old mate and I went hunting on a property that has been in limbo for years. The tracks are in disrepair and only used by buggies and quadbikes, with some sections so tight that we had to use an axe to cut small trees down; a good reason to carry an axe or one of those nifty battery-operated chainsaws ...

BOGGED

BOGS happen when you suddenly hit a soft patch or run out of engine power to get you over the top of a dune or across a long stretch of heavy sand. The first thing to do is to stop, because spinning wheels dig down deeper and can damage your vehicle's gearbox. If there is another vehicle with you it's an easy escape with a snatch strap, while a winch hooked up with a sand anchor (or buried tyre) is another method when stuck on a beach or dune. On tree-lined bush tracks it's simple to hook the winch cable to a tree, though in the damp parts and after the wet

season, small trees will pull out from the ground.

One of the easiest means of un-bogging a vehicle from sand is with recovery boards. However, don't forget to carry a long-handled shovel in case some digging about the wheels is required. Avoid short-handled and survival shovels if you want to avoid a bad back.

If you head off the dirt roads and on to monsoon forest tracks on the Cape, or pretty much anywhere in the tropical north, you will encounter conditions as described. Plan for them because it can all go wrong in a split second ... 



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COOPERS
The AT3s
performing in
the muck.

20,000KM TYRE TEST

THE FJ CRUISER HASN'T SEEN A LOT OF USE LATELY, BUT WITH 20,000KM ON ITS COOPER AT3 LT TYRES WE THOUGHT IT TIME TO TAKE A LOOK AT HOW THEY ARE PERFORMING

ADMIT the last time I wrote about these Cooper AT3 LT tyres I mentioned there'd be a review at 10,000km. With the FJCruiser being a daily driver and a weekend warrior, that would've made sense, however, I regularly get thrown the keys to press-fleet vehicles to drive and test, and often for a few months at a time, so the FJ sat sullen outside the house for extended periods, just catching bird poop.

After fitting a new battery and dropping it off for a well-overdue service (including a tyre rotation) at Terrain Tamer, there's now around 20,000 clicks on the Coopers AT3 LTs.

What makes the AT3 LT a great tyre choice is its advanced technology silica compound, which is claimed to have up to four times more coupled silica than other tyres to provide more contact on the road, less bounce, less friction and better grip, as well as increased mileage.

About 80 per cent of my driving is on the blacktop and when the AT3 LTs were fitted, I instantly noticed a huge reduction in noise compared with the old tyres; the tread design is said to provide a 20 per cent reduction in road noise. Listening to music without having to turn up the volume is convenient, especially on long drives when I'm on assignment to photograph 4x4s all over Victoria.

With many photoshoots taking me on to gravel roads, it's good that these tyres grip well in the dirt, and although I'm always mindful to drive to the conditions, the reduction in bounce on corrugated corners is quite noticeable.

On one trip out to Lerederg State Park we put the FJ through its paces on some of the undulating tracks where the AT3s performed exceptionally well, making light work of the dips and holes as the FJ's suspension maxed out its articulation.

The construction of the tyres features high-tensile cord across the tread face and in the sidewalls, which is quoted to reduce the chance of tyre damage by 33 per cent, provide higher carrying capacity, and give up to 15 per cent better puncture protection and greater impact strength. While this is hard to quantify, when the tyres were rotated and inspected they showed very little visual damage other than looking a bit scuffed with some rounding on the outer sides compared with the unused spare. Some of this could be the result of urban kerb bumps when parking.

The FJ runs 265/70R17 AT3 LTs with a tread depth of 13.1mm. Measuring each tyre in the centre and checking the edges for this review, the average wear is about 1mm



DURABILITY
The FJ Cruiser rides high upon rugged Cooper AT3 LT all-terrains.

THEY'VE GIVEN ME DRIVING CONFIDENCE IN ALL OF THE CONDITIONS I'VE PUT THEM THROUGH THUS FAR, AND THE HANDLING IS CONSIDERABLY BETTER THAN MY OLD TIRED TYRES

give or take, with about half of millimetre on the outer sides.

I'm not a hardcore off-roader so I didn't expect there to be much damage or tyre wear, but I do travel in all weather conditions and with the FJ tipping the scales at nearly 2000kg, stopping confidently in the wet is important. Cooper notes that the maximised full-depth microgauge siping on the AT3 LTs reduces slipping in the wet, giving better all-round grip, and while I'm not always fixated on this, there's no doubt the AT3s do pull up the FJ well in the wet.

The sipe design also prevents stones drilling into the tyre and prevents tread damage, of which there is little at 20,000km. As for mud, they eject it much better than the OE tyres fitted to press vehicles I have driven through the boggy limestone sludge at Lerederg.

I haven't yet had the chance to try the AT3 LTs on the beach, but hopefully I will get to do so prior to the next update.

Overall, I've been really impressed with the AT3s. They've given me driving confidence in all of the conditions I've put them through thus far, and the handling is considerably better than my old tired tyres. I'm certainly keen to see if the claimed greater strength and durability of these tyres sees them still performing well at 50,000km. Stay tuned. 



TREAD
Even after 20,000 kays, tread wear is minimal.

RATED

RRP: POA

AVAILABLE FROM: coopertires.com.au

WE SAY: Quality all-terrain tyres that are performing well on the road and the dirt and which show minimal wear after 20,000km.



AUSSIE WASH

THIS AUSSIE COMPANY MAKES SOME FANTASTIC 4X4-SPECIFIC CLEANING PRODUCTS, ALL DEVELOPED AND PRODUCED RIGHT HERE IN AUSTRALIA

WORDS AND PHOTOS KEV SMITH

I'VE been a car person for many years, from street and rally cars, to tourers and 4x4s. Back in the day there wasn't much of a range of cleaning products to keep your pride and joy looking good, but today there are so many products it can get confusing.

My 80 Series LandCruiser is nearly always off road, in some of the harshest conditions that our country can dish up, and it's often dirty and dusty for weeks on end. But I find with the right products my 34-year-old Cruiser comes up a treat time and time again.

While I'm happy enough to use self-serve car washes for high-pressure washing and rinsing while I'm on the road, I refuse to use those scratchy brushes on the paintwork. A few years ago I was introduced to the Bowden's Own range of car-care products, and just recently they released some special cleaning agents for 4x4s.

A bit of history behind the brand: With a shed full of unique cars the Bowdens used to use high-quality cleaning products from the USA and Europe, but they began to notice





BEFORE/AFTER
Before applying Under Armer (left); the result of the Under Armer finish is clear to see.



DUE TO CONSTANT DEMAND FROM OFF-ROADERS, BOWDEN'S OWN HAS NOW DEVELOPED A RANGE OF PRODUCTS AND TOOLS FOR FOUR-WHEEL DRIVERS

issues with having cheap ingredients in the formulas. As a result the Bowdens decided to develop a range of their own and by the year 2000 they had a batch of four products to use on their own vehicles. Then, in 2002, they took the plunge and started to market this range to the public. Over the next few years the Bowden's Own range grew and grew, with the early products hand made and bottled in a shed on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland.

Bowden's Own makes it clear that it only uses local chemists to research and develop products, and uses local production companies for packing and distribution. Each product is custom made from scratch to be the best it can be. Some products like Wheely Clean and Tyre Shine each took more than seven years to develop. The range is massive with everything you could ask for to clean the inside and out of your vehicle including interior protection, products to remove stubborn stains, anti-bacterial cleaners, engine cleaners, car-care kits, buckets, a huge polish range plus a range of brushes and cleaning mitts.

Due to constant demand from off-roaders, Bowden's Own has now developed a range of products and tools for four-wheel drivers. With names like Dirty Times 4WD Wash, Down & Dirty, Under Armer and The Little Stiffy brush, I knew I was in for a good time cleaning. Generally the Bowden's Own process is to pre-soak a vehicle (I used the Mega Snow Job), let it soak and then high-pressure hose off, hand wash with Dirty Times 4WD Wash, dry and then apply a wax or paint protection.

The Dirty Times 4WD Wash has advanced rust inhibitors and minerals to dissolve salt build-up. I find it breaks down the toughest of stains on my 80, especially the outback red-dirt grime that tends to build up and stick to every orifice. This product is safe for all surfaces and won't strip any ceramic coating off, and can be used on caravans, jetskis, boats and ATVs, plus it's totally biodegradable.

After a good wash I use the Twisted Mother Sucker (say that fast three times) to dry off and prepare for a coat of wax or paint restoration.

The new Down & Dirty product is simply amazing; just spray on (wheels, tyres and chassis) then use either the Little Stiffy or The Chubby brush for extra penetration and hose

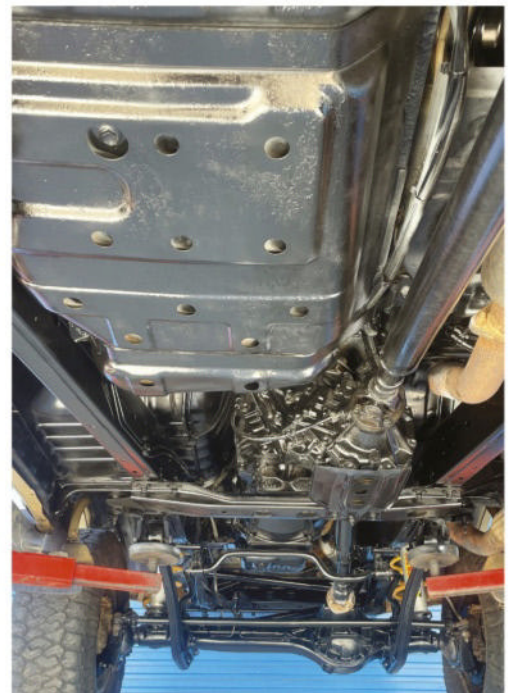


STICKY RED

A dirty rear end is an understatement, but Bowdens will clean it up.

LIKE NEW

The underside gleams after Bowden's Down & Dirty treatment.



**SCHMICK**

The old 80 Series is clean and ready for the next adventure.

off. As Bowden's Own says, "Super effective for removing stubborn red dirt, grime, mineral deposits, grease and oil from vehicle underbodies and inner guards." Down & Dirty is safe to use on all metals, plastics, rubber and non-porous surfaces. It's also good for removing black exhaust soot, built-up road grime, and mud, grease and oil marks.

I am also a big fan of Under Armer, which I use prior to every big trip as it coats the underside and chassis with an anti-corrosion barrier that will last for two to three months. This formula has taken five years to develop and it works well at repelling mud, salt, sand and road grime. Application is straightforward; high-pressure hose the underside of your 4x4, spray Under Armer on all surfaces, let it dry then hose off. It will leave the underside clean and shiny but not tacky and sticky like some others do.

The Bowden's Own website is an informative place to source what you need to look after your pride and joy. There are cleaning guides as well as a flow chart of products to help you understand the best process to clean and protect your vehicle.

As mentioned, Bowden's Own is an Australian family-owned and operated business that uses Australian companies to develop and make its products, right down to the caps, bottles and labels. As well as car and 4x4 products, there are bike-cleaning products, cannons for your home pressure washer and service kits, apparel, brushes and more. 

RATED

RRP: See Website For All Product Pricing

AVAILABLE FROM: www.bowdensown.com.au

WE SAY: Top-quality Australian cleaning and protection products designed specifically for the needs of four-wheel drivers.

MUD MUCK

These road conditions will mess up your fourbie real quick.



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THIS MONTH WE TALK TO

TERRAIN TAMER



Describe your business

Terrain Tamer is a range of 4WD Parts, manufactured by Original Equipment Manufacturers to be stronger than the original or easier to instal as a kit or assembled unit.

Suspension, Brake, Filtration, Bearing Kits, Clutch, Driveline are all designed and manufactured to be stronger, safer, and last longer. Our Head Office in Melbourne is significant in size and holds over 60,000 lines on the shelf.

Tell us some of the history of the company

Established in 1969, our parts were originally designed to help the tour operators who took tour groups into outback Australia using Bedford, Leyland and Land Rover vehicles. As they broke down, which was incredibly dangerous, they would come to see Frank, our founder, who would modify parts or source stronger parts from overseas. In the 1970s we moved into LandCruiser and HiLux vehicle applications, and now across the many popular 4WD applications such as Ford Ranger, Nissan Navara and Patrol, Isuzu D-MAX and Mazda BT-50. Gradually, part by part, 55 years later, Terrain Tamer is sought after all over the world for these innovations.



Where is the company now at

It has been an incredible journey, as we have taken our range to key markets globally over the last 40 years. Almost half our branches are now overseas in Europe, Africa, South America, NZ, PNG, Fiji, and we are very excited to now say North America.

The release of innovative parts has not slowed down, with over 2000 lines released in the last 12 months. Some of these have won innovation awards and some are relied on by Australia's largest companies, such as BHP.

What is unique about your product

We would humbly suggest that Terrain Tamer is the only true 4WD parts specialist in the world. Not accessories like bullbars, but 4WD parts that run the vehicle. We say this because we control the design, the manufacture and the distribution of the Terrain Tamer range.

Then there is the incredibly important skill of Parts Interpreting that completes each transaction. All these key aspects have taken us 55 years to create and ultimately generate a very different customer experience, compared to a general parts trader, who simply buys and sells.

If you could say two words about your product / service what would it be

Personally responsible.

What makes you different from your competition

Our 4WD Test Track at Head Office symbolises our difference. No other company in the world

has such a facility that we know of, which is a lot of fun and important to what we do and develop. It is part of the investment it takes to be the world leader, that the brand is today.

What products are you developing now

We've got GVM Upgrade applications rolling out, and many applications for the USA market; plus some interesting heavy-duty radiators, upgraded brake solutions, fortified shock absorbers and parabolic spring applications.

Who uses your products

Those who appreciate the difference.

What is your greatest achievement

We're pretty proud of having 27 staff with over 25 years' service to the company. That is out of a team of 200.

The company has always looked to hire from within, rather than dropping outside managers into a leadership role. This takes time and some would say is limiting, but we have found it an incredibly enjoyable ride, as these people grow with the company.

"We grow through our people."



The Australian Automotive 4x4 market has a rich and proud heritage. For years local design, ingenuity and showcase and support truly Australian engineered and manufactured products. There are a few aussie manufacturers

SO SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL

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manufacturing have created many fantastic four-wheel drive related products. At 4X4 Australia we are proud to keeping the dream alive, helping to keep the local manufacturing industry thriving and keeping people in real jobs.

AUSSIE-MADE PRODUCTS.

GEAR

PRODUCT TESTS & NEW STUFF

ARB ASCENT CANOPY

The Ascent is ARB's flagship canopy. It features electronic latching with remote central locking, allowing all latches to lock or unlock simultaneously with the vehicle's doors and tailgate. The canopy design includes a double-curved rear door and frameless tinted safety glass side windows. Lift-up windows with gas struts enhance access, and the optional Vent Catch allows the side windows to be adjusted between lift-up and pop-out positions. A high-flow canopy vent helps reduce dust ingress.

RRP: POA

WEBSITE: www.arb.com.au



CSA-X HORIZON WHEEL

Designed for off-road and heavy-duty applications, the CSA-X Horizon features a multi-spoke design with a 'Rock Ring' that includes debris-ejection vents. This innovative design protects the wheel and valve and reduces the build-up of dirt and debris. The wheel is stamped with a load rating of 1350kg, so it's more than capable of handling heavy loads and rough terrain. Its durable construction and baked enamel finish also provide excellent resistance to wear and rough environments such as salt spray. It is available in three finishes: Satin Black, Satin Graphite with Black Lip, and Full Machined.

RRP: POA

WEBSITE: csawheels.com.au



BUNNINGS EXPANDS AUTOMOTIVE PRODUCT RANGE

Bunnings is expanding its automotive product range, providing customers in Australia and New Zealand with access to a broader selection of gear. The expansion will see more than 350 new products available in more than 300 stores, with the range including engine oil, car accessories, coolant, wiper blades and cleaning products. Bunnings will also begin to sell chargers and cabling products for EV vehicles, as well as trial EV charging stations at select locations across Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia and New Zealand.

RRP: NA

WEBSITE: www.bunnings.com.au



BENDIX ULTIMATE 4WD BRAKE UPGRADE KITS FOR ISUZU D-MAX (RG)

Bendix has introduced its Ultimate 4WD Brake Upgrade kits for the Isuzu D-MAX (RG). The kits enhance braking performance, especially for vehicles with added weight from accessories like winches, canopies and larger tyres – these modifications are notorious for reducing braking efficiency, particularly when towing or driving off road.

The Bendix upgrade kit for the D-MAX includes disc-brake rotors, brake pads, braided brake hoses and additional items like brake fluid, lubricant and rotor wipes. The brake pads are designed for off-road use, with a ceramic formulation to reduce dust and noise infiltration, while the rotors feature high carbon metallurgy for strength and thermal stability. The braided brake hoses meet high industry standards and are made with durable PTFE tubing covered by stainless-steel braid for added protection.

RRP: POA

WEBSITE: www.bendix.com.au





XTS 4X4 1800 TRAY AND 1600 CANOPY BUNDLE

Built specifically for the 79 Series LandCruiser, this 1800 Tray and 1600 Canopy bundle is designed to transform your LandCruiser into a touring weapon. Standard tray options include a mesh headboard, a large rear trundle drawer, slide-out side lockers, mudguards, removable sides and a fuel filler, and it's powder-coated in matt or gloss. Tray extras include a vinyl wrap on the side lockers, a trundle drawer cover and/or table (\$300), and a 50L water tank in the headboard with 12V pump (\$600). The 1600 canopy is available in 1200 or 1800 sizes.

RRP: \$11,180

WEBSITE: xts4x4.com.au

STEDI SWIVEL BRACKET

The STEDI Swivel Bracket features a rugged 360-degree swivel, allowing it to precisely adjust light direction to where it's needed. Built for multiple mounting options, the bracket is constructed from high-quality 304 stainless steel, offering maximum durability and weather resistance. Its strong design ensures a secure fit on a variety of platforms, including roof racks, making it perfect for off-road enthusiasts. It's powder coated black and comes with a two-year warranty.

RRP: \$39

WEBSITE: www.stedi.com.au



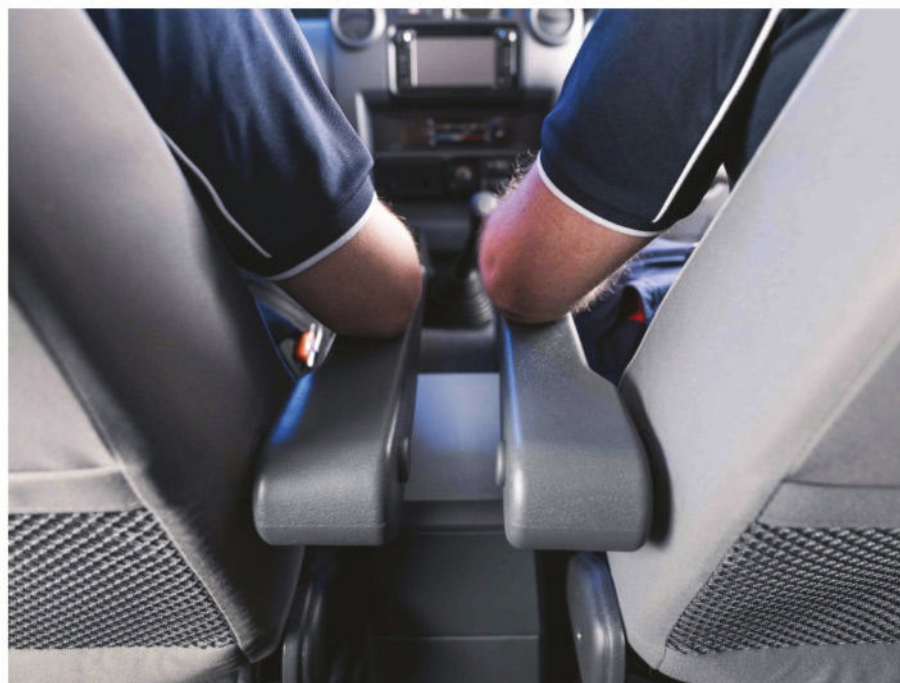


HAYMAN REESE X-BAR FOR BYD SHARK 6

BYD Shark 6 owners can now add the popular X-Bar off-road tow bar to their utes with the release of the Shark 6 X-Bar. The X-Bar provides increased departure angle and three rated recovery points to get you out of any situation. Practical design elements such as integrated bash plates and protected trailer-plug mounting points will keep you going when the going gets tough.

RRP: POA

WEBSITE: haymanreese.com.au



NSV DUAL ARM REST KIT FOR LANDCRUISER 70 SERIES

NSV Australia's Dual Arm Rest kit for the 70 Series LandCruiser offers a strong and durable solution for added comfort and support. With OEM quality and a simple installation process, this kit is the perfect addition to enhance your driving experience when you spend long hours behind the wheel in pursuit of remote campsites. The kit typically includes two armrests that can be mounted on the front seat, and it's a popular upgrade for off-roaders due to the extra support afforded. Plus, it can help reduce driver fatigue.

RRP: \$255

WEBSITE: nsvauto.com.au

MSA 4X4 PREMIUM CUTLERY PACK

This cutlery pack is a high-quality set that includes six knives, six forks, six tablespoons and six teaspoons, all made from stainless steel with a black PVD coating. The pack also features cooking knives – cleaver, chefs and paring – all with Teflon-coated stainless-steel blades and polypropylene handles. The set also comes with a spoon, spatula and tongs made from nylon with a silicone coating, along with a sustainably sourced bamboo cutting board. The pack comes with a two-year warranty.

RRP: \$167

WEBSITE: msa4x4.com.au



ROLA RIDGE MOUNT AND TITAN TRAY FOR BYD SHARK 6

Rola has released its Ridge Mount and Titan Tray for the Shark 6. The 1500x1200mm bundle is designed specifically for BYD Shark 6 (10/2024-on). The Ridge Mount is made from stainless steel and has a stipple-finish powder coat; the Titan Tray has a matching stipple-finish powder coat. Key features include dual channels, under-plank attachment points and cable concealment options.

RRP: \$1485

WEBSITE: rola.com.au





BUSHMAN 85L 12V UPRIGHT FRIDGE

The DC85-X is Bushman's best-selling 12V upright fridge, widely regarded as the brand's go-to choice for 4x4 canopies. It features an oversized refrigeration unit that ensures both efficient operation and low power consumption. Despite its compact size, the fridge offers impressive storage capacity. Every DC85-X model comes with a mounting kit and shipping is free across Australia.

It features a Bushman-designed cooling system and the world-renowned Secop Danfoss BD35 compressor. The DC85-X is also built to withstand off-road conditions with an extra low-power design that delivers exceptional performance and versatile ventilation options. Other features include an Anderson plug connection, large door shelves that can hold 2L milk bottles, ample space for tall bottles and a convenient plastic crisper tub.

The compressor is covered by a five-year warranty.

RRP: \$1495

WEBSITE: bushman.com.au



BROWN DAVIS 105L LONG-RANGE AUXILIARY FUEL TANK FOR TOYOTA LANDCRUISER 79 SERIES 2.8L DUAL CAB

The Brown Davis 105-litre auxiliary long-range fuel tank for the 2.8-litre diesel-powered 2024 79 Series expands the Cruiser's fuel capacity from 130L to 235L, which could provide an estimated range of a whopping 2448km – that's a long time between pit stops. The tank is located under the vehicle to keep weight low while not affecting ground clearance. Made from high-quality steel chosen for its resistance to wear and tear, the tank includes an independent feed system that allows drivers to switch between main and auxiliary tanks for better fuel management. The system is compatible with most aftermarket single exhausts and suspension set-ups, though dual exhausts may need modifications. The installation takes about five hours and requires no major modifications.

RRP: From \$1815 plus freight and fitting

WEBSITE: www.browndavis.com.au

READERS RIGS

**WANT TO SEE YOUR 4x4
PUBLISHED IN THE MAG?
SEND US A PIC VIA OUR
FACEBOOK PAGE!**



JAMES BRAMWELL

1957 WILLYS OVERLAND JEEP MODEL 4-75)

I purchased this in about 2000 from the St George district in Qld in very poor condition. I carried out a full restoration over a five-year period to bring it back to as-new and kept it as original as I could. It's running the original Willys F-head 134ci Hurricane engine, three-speed T90 gearbox and model 18 transfer case. Front and rear diffs are model 25 and 53 respectively. One modification was the conversion from 6V to 12V and the addition of extra gauges in the dash, otherwise the vehicle is stock-standard. I enjoy recording the history of my hometown and district of Taroom, Qld, and whilst I do not use it for hardcore four-wheel driving, the 'old girl' is surprisingly capable. I have been a Jeep man all my life.

DANIEL DUGGAN

2011 TOYOTA FJ CRUISER

The old truck is being pulled down for a rebuild at the moment. I'm going to leave it fairly stock; just fit some parabolic springs and a rear locker. I have had the FJ since new. It has Old Man Emu suspension; a front air locker; Warn winch; long-range tank; Kaymar rear bar; sliders; bullbar; Drifta drawers; a fridge, platform rack; Foxwing awning; and a few other bits and pieces. The FJ has taken us on a full lap of Oz towing our 1979 custom off-road Viscount caravan. We've been to the Cape, East Arnhem Land, Fraser, Kimberley and heaps of weekend wheeling trips. We're planning another Cape trip next year!



STEVE OHH

1974 TOYOTA LANDCRUISER FJ40

This was taken 'North of the rocks' on Cable Beach, Broome, WA, last Saturday. It had just re-opened for the year. It has the factory soft top and it was fully restored in the '90s. Still holding up well with a 327 Chev V8. I recently brought it up north from my shed in the southwest.



STEVE HARKOM

2016 HOLDEN COLORADO

It has a custom drawer/storage unit in the back and is fitted with two 100Ah deep-cycle auxiliary batteries in the tub charged via a Piranha solenoid, 160W solar on the canopy and a CTEK 240V charger if needed. It's running an 80-litre ARB fridge and built-in air compressor for tyres. It also has two Kings awnings and a custom canvas rear awning that slides into a track on the rear roof rack. Other kit includes a custom dash pod; UHF; iDrive; Ironman bar with Kings spotties and light bars; Kings winch; 90 Series Prado steel wheels; and Open Country A/T tyres.

FREDDIE DOUGALL

TOYOTA HILUX

It's a UK vehicle that we have shipped over for a 12-month road trip. It has Old Man Emu suspension; ARB front bar, Gobi-X rear swing-away bumper; full Redarc 12V set-up in the back; and a Bush Company rooftop tent and awning. Apart from travelling around the UK and Wales, it's been to Portugal, Spain and Morocco! The best place so far in Australia has to be Coffin Bay National Park, which we've only just left.



JUAN PABLO VELASQUEZ MAST

NISSAN Y61 PATROL

I am located in Chile. This GL model LWB Y61 (GU) is pretty standard for Australian specs. It has a five-speed manual, TB45E engine and 4.11 diffs. Mods include a three-inch stainless-steel exhaust with Borla muffler; ARB bumper with ARB Solis LEDs; Safari snorkel; four-inch OME lift; 35-inch KM3 tyres on Dick Cepek 15-inch wheels; ARB roof rack; ARB awning; ARB steering stabiliser; 60-inch Hi-Lift jack; and a large pocket to pay for its gasoline. It has been to Patagonia and never had any mechanical issues. 🚙

4X4 SHED

2025 MAZDA BT-50 GT

003075⁹ KM

DATE ACQUIRED:
PRICE: \$66,170
KM SINCE LAST UPDATE: 1342KM
AV FUEL: 9.2/100KM



SUMMER DAZE

THE MAZDA BT-50 IS GREAT VEHICLE FOR A QUICK CAMPING GETAWAY TO THE HILLS VICTORIAN STYLE

WITH an unusually long dry Victorian summer, it gave an opportunity to grab a night away in the Mazda before life returns to more indoors activities. Searching for a location a few hours from Melbourne that's dog friendly and scenic I found a campground that looked the perfect fit, in Loch Valley, Gippsland. Whilst solo camping is okay, having a buddy for Cleo and I would be more fun. Karen, who often minds Cleo enthusiastically accepted, bringing Piper, for furry buddy adventures.

Camping regardless of the amount of time away requires 'Stuff', and with the BT-50's canopy and large Decker drawer, it's a throw it all in affair. Tent, sleeping mats, chairs, water, tables, large esky and dog paraphernalia. With all this, the canopy was fairly full but not Tetris level and the drawers still empty. If the Mazda was a permanent car I'd kit out the drawer set-up with all my standard camping requirements, pantry, kitchen utensils, Jetboil and the

like. I love the lockable side windows, being able to access things towards the back of the canopy without having to repack has huge benefits.

Of course, the weather decided to turn for the worse belting down rain overnight prompting some additional gear to be packed, morning rises, and still drizzling I duck around the corner collecting the fellow travellers. With dogs on board the DOOG Car seat cover was essential for keeping the rear clean of dogs' wet feet and hair. Immediately after climbing in Karen notes that she can't charge her phone, it's the wrong plug type. There's no standard USB fitted nor a charge pad, it's plug in CarPlay only in the BT-50. The technology is changing quicker than the weather, resulting in turning back home to collect USB-C cords.

Finally heading down the M1 towards Drouin, I hit the adaptive cruise which sets easily with a touch of a couple buttons. The lane assist is active, it's noticeable in the Mazda's but not annoying, and with a simple



PAW PROOF
DOOG dog seat covers are essential, particularly when things get wet.

single touch it can be deactivated.

With pooches in the rear seat who love hanging out sniffing the air, one definitely needs a front window open to avoid the thumping noise that most new cars create.

After an easy run we turn off heading into the hills towards Noojee, the BT-50 handles well on the twisting roads, it feels confident with the standard tyres gripping the wet black top; unfortunately there'll be no real off-roading on this trip. The leather steering wheel feels nice to grip and the seats are really comfortable, which I'm sure will be great on longer trips.

We roll into Noojee village hoping to grab some firewood, but there's no servo, oops. should've planned a bit better. We'll have to hustle to find dry wood, but we're starving so head straight to the recommended lunch stop, the Toolshed Bar & Bistro.

Chowing down on a towering Steak Sanga and huge country-sized Parma we get chatting to local farmer Baz and his pooch Tex, conveniently he happens to be the local wood chopper/collector. Minutes later he kindly offers us free dry firewood, even drops it at the BT-50 on his way out. Loading it in the only remaining space, the drawer, the large logs fit easily in its deep well. The only thing I wonder is: How do to keep the drawer from sliding closed. (there's a detent to hold it open if you pull it all the way out - Ed.)

It's late arvo and we head to camp. The Poplars campground has tall towering gums,

a meandering creek, large grassy camp areas, fire pits and drop toilets making for a great quick weekend away. I set up tents while Karen, a self proclaimed fire manic, collects kindling and cranks an awesome fire.

The drizzle has stopped but both pooches are suitably wet and we huddle in close for a quiet night around the flames, snacks and a glass of red or two.

The morning brings fog, lifting late as we're in the valley this means a slow start, fending off the pooches while cooking the bacon is a laughing affair. Finally packed up we head for some sightseeing at the specy Toorongo Falls. After the loop walk we decide to head home, stopping off at a winery for a tapas lunch as the sun shines all afternoon.

Whilst this was a short stint behind the wheel, thus far the BT-50's so user friendly and certainly comfortable to drive and live with, bar one gripe. I like auto locking systems as I mentioned with the previous long-termer. I tend to carry too much at once and the auto lock/unlock helps, but in this case with the key in hand it autolocks way too soon. Getting out, walking away you're not even a metre from the vehicle. Just walking round the back the Mazda autolocks and before my passenger or pooches can get out.

This aside, enjoying the ride the BT-50 is heading north for a long road trip stay tuned.



WALKIES

The hounds check out the rustic surroundings.

CAMP STACK

Stacks of room within the canopy and drawers for all camping equipment.



FIRE ESCAPE

Shame about the Victorian weather, but a good campfire always makes up for it.



THE SCORE

THE ESSENTIAL NUMBERS AND PRICES OF EVERY 4X4 ON SALE IN AUSTRALIA

REAR VIEW

4X4 AUSTRALIA LOOKS BACK AT THE CHANGES IN THE INDUSTRY, THE RISE IN OUTBACK TOURING, THE EVOLUTIONARY SOPHISTICATION OF 4X4S, AND MORE



30 YEARS AGO – MAY 1995

The cover story for this issue pitted two of the most popular vehicles back then against one another, the GQ Patrol and the Mitsubishi Pajero, both in turbo-diesel form. We gave the winning accolade to the Patrol and today, 30 years down the track, the Patrol would be a far better option.

In our only other vehicle test for this issue we had a spin in a Daihatsu Feroza, quite a forgettable vehicle!

We packed a lot of destination and adventure yarns into this issue with a Far North Queensland adventure where we checked out the region's canoeing, diving and four-wheel

driving attractions before heading over to the Gulf Country to see what that area had to offer. Then, still in Queensland, we trekked the Deepwater National Park, and for something a little further south we wandered along the Crooked River in eastern Victoria.

Equipment-wise we had a survey on communication gear and the best set-up for your travels. Back then long-distance communication was all about HF radios and we had a lift-out on the RFDS bases and Radphone services around Australia that provided HF call centres. Things have changed a bit these days but you can still use your HF.



20 YEARS AGO – MAY 2005

With the Outback touring season just around the corner the major story in this issue was gearing up to go with all the drum on snorkels, lights, satphones, tyres and a whole lot more. Most of it is all very relevant today.

Our comparison test for this issue was a four-way tussle between the ol' stalwarts of the Prado, Patrol and Pajero against the newcomer and sub-\$40K Hyundai Terracan. The Prado was the all-round winner, and while the Terracan was placed second, the GU

Patrol was considered the best in the off-road sections.

Heading bush we had travel yarns from the Top End of the Northern Territory, the Border Ranges National Park in northern NSW and Marble Bar in Western Australia. With the Outback Challenge about to be rejuvenated we had a highly modified GQ Patrol lining up for the action, while we also had a look at Round One of ARB's Extreme Winch Challenge where there was action aplenty!



10 YEARS AGO – MAY 2015

The Kimberley loomed large with a guide on where to go but also what to take and how to prepare for a trip that, for many, is about as far away as you can get from home and still be in Oz. It's also hot and the country rugged and rocky with no soft edges to let you get away with a mistake or two in equipment or technique. And little has changed in the last 10 years.

In our Best of Class awards for the year we took a long, hard look at the dual-cab ute sector to see what we thought were the best of an ever-growing bunch

of models and variants. Surprisingly to some, we had the VW Amarok as the all-round winner followed by the Ford Ranger with the tried and proven HiLux taking the third place in a highly competitive field. Would those three still make the cut this year?

We drove a number of other vehicles too and went to a few more places, as well as testing a Lovells suspension upgrade, a Safe-T-Tyre pressure monitor system and a Torqit Pedal Torq throttle upgrade kit, some or all of which you'd still want today?



BUSINESS AS USUAL

It's business as usual for the Ford Ranger and Toyota HiLux at the head of the new 4x4 sales charts for the month of March. Ford delivered 4687 new 4x4 Rangers to customers for the month, while the aging HiLux continues to sell well for Toyota with 3360 units finding new homes.

The BYD Shark 6 again outsold established players in the ute segment – such as D-MAX, Triton, BT-50 and Navara – selling 2810 units for the month to be the fourth best seller overall for the month and the sixth best-selling 4x4 overall in year-to-date terms.

Toyota's 250 Series Prado was again the best-selling 4x4 wagon moving 2871 vehicles ahead of Ford Everest with 2100 units sold. These two popular 4x4 wagons maintain third and fourth spots in YTD sales for '25.

While the Prado and HiLux continue to do well for Toyota, the brand's hero model, the LandCruiser 300 Series, continues on a slow burn with just 199 units leaving showrooms in March. The Nissan Patrol outsold the LandCruiser 300, with 710 units sold, and with updates to the Patrol coming in May, it should continue to find plenty of new buyers before the Y63 lands later this year, if not early in 2026.

The other slow-moving Toyota is the Tundra pickup with just 85 units sold, but it still performed better than the Ford F-150 which only moved 69 units, while the Chevy Silverado and Ram 1500 sold 257 and 211 units respectively. The team at Ram Trucks Australia is looking to gain ground from this month with the arrival of its new Hurricane engine and the improved performance fuel efficiency it brings.

While the BYD Shark 6 is now mixing it with the biggest players in the segment, at the budget end of the ute segment the GWM Cannon moved 827 trucks, the LDV T60 397 units and the Jac T9 just 117 units. The aging SsangYong Musso continues to be our favourite at this end of the market and it soldiered on with 196 sales in March.

When you look at combined numbers of 4x4 and 4x2 models, the Ranger continues to lead the race over HiLux, but in-between the two utes, the Toyota RAV4 is still selling strongly, showing that Australians still have a preference for utes and SUVs as their new cars.

JUST THE FACTS

Top-selling 4x4s in March 2025

Source: VFACTS

VEHICLE	UNITS
1. Ford Ranger	4687
2. Toyota HiLux	3360
3. Toyota Prado	2871
4. BYD Shark 6	2810
5. Ford Everest	2100
6. Mitsubishi Triton	1739
7. Isuzu D-MAX	1621
8. Isuzu MU-X	1420
9. Mazda BT-50	1024
10. Toyota LC79	843

Top-selling 4x4s year-to-date to March 2025

Source: VFACTS

VEHICLE	UNITS
1. Ford Ranger	12,462
2. Toyota HiLux	9253
3. Toyota Prado	8411
4. Ford Everest	4986
5. Isuzu D-MAX	4891
6. BYD Shark 6	4836
7. Mitsubishi Triton	4032
8. Mazda BT-50	3197
9. Isuzu MU-X	2919
10. Toyota LandCruiser 79	2304

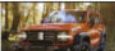
 FORD 5-year/unlimited km www.ford.com.au									
RANGER									
The next-gen Ranger took the best-seller crown away from Hilux in 2023. Full-time 4x4 is offered on all V6 models and the 2.0TD Wildtrak X. There is a price hike across the range this month.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Single XL C/C	47,980	BIT4/2.0	A10	500	154	1903	1327	3500	80
Super XL C/C	50,480	BIT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2007	1223	3500	80
Super XL P/U	52,380	BIT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2167	1063	3500	80
Double XL C/C	48,980	SIT4/2.0	A6	405	125	2046	1144	3500	80
Double XL C/C	51,780	BIT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2072	1158	3500	80
Double XL P/U	50,880	SIT4/2.0	A6	405	125	2190	1000	3500	80
Double XL P/U	53,680	BIT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2216	1014	3500	80
Double XLS P/U	57,630	BIT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2216	1014	3500	80
Super XLT P/U	61,390	BIT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2178	1052	3500	80
Double XLT P/U	63,390	BIT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2225	1005	3500	80
Double XLT C/C	65,690	V6/3.0	A10	600	184	2129	1151	3500	80
Double XLT P/U	63,640	BIT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2217	1015	3500	80
Double XLT P/U	68,840	V6/3.0	A10	600	184	2285	995	3500	80
Double Sport P/U	66,140	BIT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2242	988	3500	80
Double Sport P/U	71,340	V6/3.0	A10	600	184	2300	980	3500	80
Dbl Wildtrak P/U	69,640	BIT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2295	985	3500	80
Dbl Tremor P/U	69,690	BIT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2419	901	3500	80
Dbl Wildtrak P/U	74,840	V6/3.0	A10	600	184	2353	997	3500	80
Dbl Wildtrak X P/U	77,640	BIT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2432	918	3500	80
Dbl Platinum P/U	80,640	V6/3.0	A10	600	184	N/A	N/A	3500	80
Dbl Raptor P/U	90,440	V6P/3.0	A10	583	292	2431	753	2500	80

 EVEREST									
Everest's four variants are joined by two more – the Wildtrak and Tremor – sitting between Sport and Platinum and available with the 3.0-litre TDV6 donk. There's also a price increase for this month.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Ambiente	59,240	L4TD/2.0	A10	500	154	2367	733	3500	80
Trend	67,040	L4TD/2.0	A10	500	154	2383	717	3500	80
Sport	74,640	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2454	696	3500	80
Tremor	76,590	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	N/A	N/A	3500	80
Wildtrak	76,950	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2488	662	3500	80
Platinum	81,200	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2492	658	3500	80

 F150									
Ford Australia has brought the F150 back to our shores with two models available in two wheelbases. The long wheelbase adds \$995 to the price and also gets you a longer cargo bed.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
XLT (SWB)	106,950	V6TP/3.5	A10	678	298	2451	769	4500	136
XLT (LWB)	107,945	V6TP/3.5	A10	678	298	N/A	N/A	4500	136
Lariat (SWB)	139,950	V6TP/3.5	A10	678	298	2555	710	4500	136
Lariat (LWB)	140,945	V6TP/3.5	A10	678	298	N/A	N/A	4500	136

 BYD 5-year/unlimited km www.ford.com.au									
SHARK6									
Build Your Dreams first entry to the Australian market is the Shark double0cab ute and it comes with a hybrid EV powertrain and a preper 4x4 system									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Shark 6 Premium	57,900	T4PHEV/1.5	CVT	650	321	2710	790	2500	60

 GWM 7-year/unlimited km www.gmwute.com.au									
UTE									
GWM's next-gen Cannon features a more grunty 2.4-litre turbo-diesel four-cylinder donk (replacing the previous-gen 2.0TD), backed by a nine-speed auto gearbox. It also has a higher braked towing capacity.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Lux	40,490*	L4TD/2.4	A9	480	135	2230	995	3500	75
Ultra	43,490*	L4TD/2.4	A9	480	135	2230	995	3500	75
Vanta	45,490*	L4TD/2.4	A9	480	135	2230	995	3500	75
XSR	49,990*	L4TD/2.4	A9	480	135	2230	875	3500	75

 TANK 300									
The Tank 300's duo of 2.0-litre petrol-electric hybrid versions are now joined by two 2.0-litre petrol-only powered rigs at significantly lower asking prices.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Tank 300 Lux	46,990	L4TP/2.0	A8	380	162	2155	N/A	2500	75
Tank 300 Ultra	50,990	L4TP/2.0	A8	380	162	2155	N/A	2500	75
Tank 300 Lux H	55,990	L4HY/2.0	A9	640	224	2331	N/A	2500	75
Tank 300 Ultra H	60,990	L4HY/2.0	A9	640	224	2331	N/A	2500	75

 GMSV www.gmspecialtyvehicles.com.au									
CHEVROLET SILVERADO 1500									
For 2023 Chevrolet dropped the previous entry-level model, the LT Trail Boss. A new hero ZR2 model is now positioned at the top of the two-model range. Both powered by a 6.2-litre petrol V8.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
ZR2	138,000*	V8/6.2	A10	624	313	2583	717	4200	91
LTZ Premium	163,000	V8/6.2	A10	624	313	2543	757	4500	91

 INEOS www.ineosgrenadier.com/en/au/									
GRENADIER									
Ineos brings back the simple, durable 4x4 vehicle that adventurers and organisations want for serious off-road travel, available with both petrol and diesel powertrains and two-seat (2s) or five-seat (5s) interiors.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Utility wagon 2s	104,000	I6P/3.0	A8	450	210	2618	932	3500	90
Fieldmaster 2s	122,000	I6D/3.0	A8	550	183	2693	857	3500	90
Trialmaster 2s	122,000	I6P/3.0	A8	450	210	2643	907	3500	90
Station wagon 5s	105,000	I6P/3.0	A8	450	210	2643	907	3500	90
Trialmaster 5s	123,000	I6P/3.0	A8	450	210	2643	907	3500	90
Fieldmaster 5s	123,000	I6D/3.0	A8	550	183	2718	832	3500	90

 ISUZU UTE 6-year/150,000km www.isuzuute.com.au									
D-MAX									
D-MAX has cut its links with GM and is an all-Isuzu affair. The latest model is a huge step up with class-leading safety tech, more power and torque from the 3.0L, and fresh, aggressive styling.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
SX Single c/c	42,700	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140	1780	1310	3500	76
SX Space c/c	48,200	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	1860	1240	3500	76
LS-M Crew c/c	54,300	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2030	1070	3500	76
LS-U Crew c/c	61,000	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	1970	1130	3500	76
LS-U Space p/u	59,500	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2000	1100	3500	76
SX Crew c/c	49,200	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	1910	1190	3500	76
SX Crew p/u	50,700	I4TD/1.9	A6	350	110	N/A	N/A	3000	76
SX Crew p/u	52,700	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2035	1065	3500	76
LS-M Crew p/u	55,800	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2030	1070	3500	76
X-Rider Crew p/u	59,500	I4TD/3.0	6	450	140	N/A	N/A	3500	76
LS-U Crew p/u	59,000	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2045	1055	3500	76
LS-U+ Crew p/u	65,500	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2115	985	3500	76
X-Terrain Crew p/u	67,990	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2130	970	3500	76
Blade Crew p/u	76,990*	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	N/A	N/A	3500	76

 MU-X									
Isuzu's seven-seat wagon based on the D-MAX ute underpinnings, but with a smooth-riding coil-spring rear suspension. Buyers have the option of the tried-and-true 3.0-litre TD or new 1.9-litre oiler.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
LS-M	53,400	L4TD/1.9	A6	350	110	2140	735	3000	80
LS-M	55,400	L4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2092	658	3500	80
LS-U	59,900	L4TD/1.9	A6	350	110	2088	685	3000	80
LS-U	61,900	L4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2142	608	3500	80
LS-T	67,990	L4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2157	593	3500	80
Tour Mate									

 JEEP 5-year/unlimited km www.jeep.com.au									
WRANGLER									
JL Wrangler has true off-road credentials and great versatility. In Rubicon-spec, the Wrangler is an absolute off-road weapon.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Rubicon (2D)	82,950	I4TP/2.0	A8	400	200	1762	551	1497	81
Sport S (4D)	75,950	I4TP/2.0	A8	400	200	N/A	N/A	2495	81
Overland (4D)	83,950	I4TP/2.0	A8	400	200	1900	560	2495	81
Rubicon (4D)	89,450	I4TP/2.0	A8	400	200	1992	570	2495	81

 GRAND CHEROKEE									
Jeep's fifth-gen Grand Cherokee five-seater runs a grunty V6 petrol engine across most models, with a PHEV powerplant available on the new 4xe variant.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Night Eagle	65,450	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2167	N/A	2813	87
Limited	72,950	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2167	N/A	2813	87
Overland	77,750	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2167	N/A	2813	87
Summit Res. 4xe	110,850	L4PHY/2.0	A8	637	280	2536	N/A	2722	72

	GRAND CHEROKEE L								
	The seven-seat Grand Cherokee runs V6 petrol power exclusively. Four variants on offer, with Overland and Summit Reserve featuring Jeep's Quadra-Lift air suspension.								
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Night Eagle	69,450	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2190	N/A	2813	87
Limited	75,950	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2190	N/A	2813	87
Overland	80,450	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2270	N/A	2813	87
Summit Reserve	90,450	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2270	N/A	2813	87

	GLADIATOR									
	Jeep's double-cab pick-up comes in two spec levels, with the Pentastar V6 and 8-speed auto in both. The Night Eagle is the entry level while the Rubicon is the better equipped off-roader.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL	
Night Eagle	78,250	V6/3.6P	A8	347	209	2104	693	2721	83	
Rubicon	87,250	V6/3.6P	A8	347	209	2215	693	2721	83	



LAND ROVER

www.landrover.com.au

DEFENDER 90

Defender 90 range closely mimics the 110 wagon range but in a shorter three-door wagon body. Right from the four-cylinder petrol motors, through the various diesels, and up to the stonking V8.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
D90 P300	80,540	I4/2.0P	A8	400	221	2074	N/A	3500	90
D90 S P300	88,870	I4/2.0P	A8	400	221	2074	N/A	3500	90
D90 S D250	92,626	I6/3.0D	A8	570	183	2303	667	3500	89
D90 SE P400	110,870	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	2141	N/A	3500	90
D90 X P400	154,546	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	2141	N/A	3500	90
D90 P525	191,288	V8/5.0P	A8	625	386	2470	N/A	3000	90

	DEFENDER 110									
	The 'new' Defender has been around for a while now, with incremental increases in power/torque outputs, engine options and (sadly) pricing along the way. Its bling exterior belies its off-road capability.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL	
P400 S	93,907	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	90	
D350 SE	108,795	I6/3.0D	A8	700	257	N/A	N/A	3500	90	
P400 SE	114,165	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	90	
P400 HSE	128,815	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	90	
D350 HSE	124,040	I6/3.0D	A8	700	257	N/A	N/A	3500	90	
D350 X	157,224	I6/3.0D	A8	700	257	N/A	N/A	3500	90	
D350 Sedona Ed.	134,706	I6/3.0D	A8	700	257	N/A	N/A	3500	90	
P400 X	150,620	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	90	
P400e SE	126,275	I4PH/2.0P	A8	640	297	N/A	N/A	3500	90	
P400e HSE	137,975	I4PH/2.0P	A8	640	297	N/A	N/A	3500	90	
P525 V8	198,914	V8/5.0P	A8	625	386	N/A	N/A	3500	90	
P635 OCTA	291,542	V8/5.0P	A8	750	467	N/A	N/A	3500	90	



DEFENDER 130

The largest-ever Defender is here and brings with it a lot more rear cargo space, along with some sweet powerplant options for this biggest of Brit off-roaders.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
D300 X-Dyna SE	129,365	I6/3.0D	A8	650	220	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P400 X-Dyna SE	133,471	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	NA	3500	90
P400 Outbound	135,562	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P500	216,1970	V8/5.0P	A8	610	368	N/A	N/A	3500	90

	DISCOVERY									
	Land Rover Discovery combines excellent on-road dynamics with impressive off-road capability. Strong performance comes via the choice of V6 turbo-diesel or V6 petrol powerplants.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL	
D350 S Dynamic	116,006	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	257	2109	831	3500	90	
D350 SE Dynamic	123,564	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	257	2236	814	3500	90	
D350 HSE Dynam	130,405	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	257	2236	814	3500	90	
D350 35th Anniv.	133,176	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	257	2236	814	3500	90	
P360 S RDynamic	121,539	I6TP/3.0	A8	500	265	2236	814	3500	90	
P360 SE Dynamic	122,070	I6TP/3.0	A8	500	265	2236	814	3500	90	
P360 HSE Dynam	128,430	I6TP/3.0	A8	500	265	2236	814	3500	90	

	RANGE ROVER SPORT								
	There are six Range Sport models to choose from in this latest incarnation, with both the diesel (in three different outputs), and petrol powerplants featuring mild-hybrid tech.								
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
D250 SE	144,915	I6TD/3.0	A8	600	183	2390	830	3500	80
D300 SE Dynamic	155,876	I6TD/3.0	A8	650	221	2390	830	3500	80
D350 HSE Dyn	173,826	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	258	2435	785	3500	80
D350 Autobiog	197,176	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	225	2435	830	3500	80

P360 SE Dynamic	139,000	I6P/3.0	A8	500	265	2271	N/A	3500	80
P400 SE Dynamic	160,576	I6P/3.0	A8	550	294	2316	N/A	3500	80
P400 HSE Dyn	172,676	I6P/3.0	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	80
P460 HSE Dyn	188,100	I6P/3.0	A8	660	338	2730	720	3500	80
P460 Autobiog	211,488	I6P/3.0	A8	660	338	2730	720	3500	80
P530 Autobiog	233,961	V8TTP/4.4	A8	750	390	2436	814	3500	80
P635 SV Edition	359,715	V8TTP/4.4	A8	750	467	N/A	N/A	3500	80

	RANGE ROVER									
	Bespoke personalisation and new hybrid powertrains herald in revised Range Rover line-up.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL	
D350 HSE	258,489	I6/3.0	A8	700	258	N/A	N/A	3500	80	
P460e HSE	263,468	I6e/3.0	A8	660	338	N/A	N/A	3000	72	
P460e LWB HSE	270,880	I6e/3.0	A8	660	338	N/A	N/A	3000	72	
P530 HSE	282,500	V8/4.4	A8	750	390	N/A	N/A	3500	90	
P460e Autobiog.	296,427	I6e/3.0	A8	660	338	N/A	N/A	3000	72	
D350 A/B	298,659	I6/3.0	A8	700	258	N/A	N/A	3500	80	
P460e LWB A/B	298,999	I6e/3.0	A8	660	338	N/A	N/A	3000	72	
D350 LWB A/B	304,530	I6/3.0	A8	700	258	N/A	N/A	3500	80	
D350 LWB 7s A/B	306,075	I6/3.0	A8	700	258	N/A	N/A	3500	80	
P530 Autobiog.	331,434	V8/4.4	A8	750	390	N/A	N/A	3500	90	
P530 LWB A/B	337,614	V8/4.4	A8	750	390	N/A	N/A	3500	90	
P530 LWB 7s A/B	339,314	V8/4.4	A8	750	390	N/A	N/A	3500	90	
P615 SV	395,655	V8/4.4	A8	750	452	N/A	N/A	3500	90	
P615 LWB SV	443,436	V8/4.4	A8	750	452	N/A	N/A	3500	90	



LDV

7-year/200,000km www.ldvautomotive.com.au



T60

Chinese ute brings five-star safety to the budget-priced dual-cab segment. Revamped in 2021, with the Pro variants bringing more power and redesigned front-end.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Max Pro (manual)	41,042	I4/2.0	M6	500	160	N/A	935	3000	73
Max Pro (auto)	43,148	I4/2.0	A8	500	160	N/A	925	3000	73
Max Luxe (manual)	45,779	I4/2.0	M6	500	160	N/A	935	3000	73
Max Luxe (auto)	47,884	I4/2.0	A8	500	160	2900	925	3000	73
Max Luxe Mega Tub	49,463	I4/2.0	A8	500	160	2900	925	3000	73
Max Plus (manual)	48,411	I4/2.0	M6	500	160	2900	925	3000	73
Max Plus Mega Tub	52,095	I4/2.0	A8	500	160	N/A	N/A	3000	73



LEXUS

5-year/unlimited

www.lexus.com.au

LX

Now with two powerplant options – the diesel is a trick twin-turbo V6; the petrol is rorty, if not as glorious as the previous-gen V8 – and improved dynamics, this is now capital “L” for luxury with bite.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
LX500	155,976	V6TTD/3.3	A10	700	227	2690	TBC	3500	80
LX500 SL	172,976	V6TTD/3.3	A10	700	227	2690	TBC	3500	80
LX500 SL (7-seat)	175,576	V6TTD/3.3	A10	700	227	2690	TBC	3500	80
LX500 F Sport	178,976	V6TTD/3.3	A10	700	227	2690	TBC	3500	80
LX600	159,476	V6TTP/3.5	A10	650	305	2660	TBC	3500	110
LX600 SL	176,476	V6TTP/3.5	A10	650	305	2660	TBC	3500	110
LX600 SL (7-seat)	180,276	V6TTP/3.5	A10	650	305	2660	TBC	3500	110
LX600 F Sport	182,476	V6TTP/3.5	A10	650	305	2660	TBC	3500	110
LX600 Ultra Lux	217,976	V6TTP/3.5	A10	650	305	2660	TBC	3500	110

	MAHINDRA 5-year/unlimited www.mahindra.com.au								
	PIK-UP								
	Now dual-cab only and still with the option of tub or no tub, this tough and reliable farm truck is proving popular out bush and is good bang for your workhorse bucks.								
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Dual Cab	39,990*	L4TD/2.2	A6	330	103	1940	1210	2500	80



SCORPIO

It may be missing some key safety technology, but the Scorpio six-seater isn't just a good value-for-money package, it's a good rig overall.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Z8	41,990*	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	129	1900	525	2500	57
Z8L	45,990*	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	129	2100	510	2500	57

*This is a nationwide drive-away price, not a list price, and includes on-roads.



MAZDA

5-year/unlimited km www.mazda.com.au

BT-50

The BT-50 has stepped away from its Ford roots, as Mazda partnered with Isuzu for the new model. That means Isuzu powertrains and class-leading safety wrapped in a svelte Mazda skin.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Dual XS p/u	52,930	I4TD/1.9	A6	350	110	1935	1165	3500	76
Single XT c/c	43,520	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1186	3500	76
Single XT c/c	46,733	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1186	3500	76
Extra XT c/c	47,020	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1135	3500	76
Extra XT c/c	49,953	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1135	3500	76
Dual XT c/c	51,960	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1096	3500	76
Dual XT c/c	51,330	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1106	3500	76
Dual XT p/u	52,730	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1095	3500	76
Dual XT p/u	55,080	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1090	3500	76
Dual XTR c/c	57,880	I4TD./1.0	A6	450	140	1910	1190	3500	76
Dual XTR p/u	56,780	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1080	3500	76
Dual XTR p/u	60,623	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1070	3500	76
Dual GT p/u	57,090	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1075	3500	76
Dual GT p/u	62,660	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1065	3500	76
Dual SP p/u	63,090	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140	2198	902	3500	76
Dual SP p/u	68,690	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2208	892	3500	76
Dual Thunder p/u	74,095	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2213	887	3500	76



MERCEDES

3-year/200,000km www.mercedes-benz.com.au



G-CLASS

With triple diff locks, long-travel coil suspension and rugged construction, Merc's Gelandewagen is off-road heritage writ large. Unfortunately, so is the price tag on an updated 30-year-old design.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
G63 AMG	259,600	V8/4.0	A9	850	430	2560	640	3500	100
G400d	233,776	I6/2.9	A9	700	243	2489	661	3500	112



MITSUBISHI

7-year/150,000km www.mitsubishi-motors.com.au



PAJERO SPORT

Pajero Sport replaced the Challenger in Mitsubishi's 4x4 range. It's still on a Triton ute chassis but with rear coils under the back and bespoke bodywork. 2020 refresh added Dynamic Shield front end.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
GLX (5-seat)	51,540	L4TD/2.4	A8	430	133	2145	630	3100	68
GLS (7s)	56,890	L4TD/2.4	A8	430	133	2195	580	3100	68
GLS Deluxe (7s)	57,440	L4TD/2.4	A8	430	133	2204	571	3100	68
Exceed (7s)	62,590	L4TD/2.4	A8	430	133	2209	566	3100	68
GSR (7s)	64,840	L4TD/2.4	A8	430	133	2209	566	3100	68



TRITON

MR Triton consists of a four-model line-up that tops out with the GSR. All models get a 2.4-litre, turbocharged diesel engine with a six-speed transmission.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
GLX Single c/c	33,240	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1660	1235	3000	75
GLX Single c/c	37,490	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1665	1235	3000	75
GLX Club c/c	39,940	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1765	1135	3000	75
GLX ADAS Club c/c	39,040	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1780	1120	3000	75
GLX Dual c/c	41,440	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1795	1105	3100	75
GLX ADAS Dual c/c	39,790	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1795	1105	3100	75
GLX+ Club p/u	45,440	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1930	970	3100	75
GLX Dual p/u	37,490	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1920	980	3100	75
GLX Dual p/u	50,940	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1920	980	3100	75
GLX ADAS Dual p/u	38,540	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1951	949	3100	75
GLX ADAS Dual p/u	41,040	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1956	944	3100	75
GLX+ Dual p/u	44,940	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1915	985	3100	75
GLX+ Dual p/u	53,290	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1915	985	3100	75
GLX-R	41,990	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	N/A	N/A	3100	75

GLX-R	56,740	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	N/A	N/A	3100	75
GLS Dual p/u	45,440	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1935	965	3100	75
GLS Dual p/u	59,090	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1935	965	3100	75
GLS Premium	52,790	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	2042	848	3100	75
GSR	63,840	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1999	901	3100	75



NISSAN

5-year/unlimited km www.nissan.com.au



PATROL Y62

In a segment that drinks diesel, top-spec Patrol is available in V8-petrol guise only. Fully independent suspension is backed by electronic traction aids. Updated model launched late in 2019.

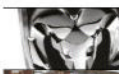
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Ti	89,260	V8/5.6	A7	560	298	2812	688	3500	140
Ti-L	101,960	V8/5.6	A7	560	298	2708	746	3500	140
PRO-4X Warrior	105,520	V8/5.6	A7	560	289	2884	736	3500	140



NAVARA D23

The latest iteration of Nissan's D23 Navara ute range arrives with a bolder look and a revised line-up. Pro-4X Warrior has to be the best navara produced ever!.

Single SL c/c	40,928	L4TD/2.3	M6	403	120	1614	1296	3500	80
King SL c/c	47,428	L4TD/2.3	A7	403	120	1727	1183	3500	80
King SL p/u	49,228	L4TD/2.3	A7	450	140	1941	969	3500	80
King ST-X p/u	59,323	L4TD/2.3	A7	450	140	1944	966	3500	80
Dual SL c/c	46,428	L4TD/2.3	M6	403	120	1759	1147	3500	80
Dual SL p/u	48,228	L4TD/2.3	M6	450	140	1823	1087	3500	80
Dual ST p/u	53,333	L4TD/2.3	M6	450	140	N/A	N/A	3500	80
Dual ST-X p/u	56,823	L4TD/2.3	M6	450	140	1917	993	3500	80
Dual ST-X p/u	58,270	L4TD/2.3	A7	450	140	1921	989	3500	80
Dual SL Warrior	59,628	L4TD/2.3	A7	450	140	2169	1081	3500	80
PRO-4X	59,783	L4TD/2.3	M6	450	140	2186	724	3500	80
PRO-4X Warrior	69,143	L4TD/2.3	A7	450	140	2151	1019	3500	80



RAM

3-year/100,000 km www.ramtrucks.com.au



RAM 1500

You'll find Ram trucks here from various importers, but the official distributor is Ram Trucks Australia. Currently selling the DT Ram 1500.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Laramie	137,950	V8P/5.7	A8	556	291	2617	833	4500	98
Laramie Sport	141,950	V8P/5.7	A8	556	291	2671	779	4500	98
Big Horn	119,950	V8P/5.7	A8	556	291	N/A	N/A	4500	98
Limited	156,950	V8P/5.7	A8	556	291	2749	701	4500	98
TRX	224,950	V8P/6.2	A8	882	523	3033	767	3500	125



RAM 2500

The 2500 is the first of the heavy duty Ram models and is only available in Laramie specification in Australia. Powered by the Cummins in-line six, the 2500 is a torque monster and towing champion.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
2500 Laramie	172,950	I6d/6.7	A6	1152	276	3660	835	4500	117



RAM 3500

The 1500 is the standard model while the 2500 and 3500 Rams are the Heavy Duty versions packing HD drivelines, Cummins diesel engines and huge towing capacities. New HD models also coming soon.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Laramie Crew	177,950	I6TD/6.7	A6	1152	276	3596	1713	6170*	132



SSANGYONG

7-year/unlimited km www.ssangyong.com.au



MUSSO

Thrifty South Korean dual-cab has been reborn with more subdued styling and an unbeatable warranty. XLV variant adds segment-topping tray length to the line-up's killer pricing.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
EX	30,490	L4TD/2.2	M6	400	133	2177	703	3500	75
EX	32,490	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2192	688	3500	75
ELX	40,000	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2192	688	3500	75
Ultimate	45,000	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2192	688	3500	75
ELX XLV	33,990	L4TD/2.2	M6	400	133	2160	1025	3500	75
ELX XLV	41,500	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2170	1025	3500	75
Ultimate XLV	46,500	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2170	880	3500	75
Ultimate Luxury	48,000	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2170	880	3500	75
Ult. Luxury XLV	49,500	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2170	880	3500	75

REXTON									
The South Korean manufacturer's large wagon now has three variants and a smooth-shifting eight-speed auto gear box. It is loaded with kit and comes with a lean price tag.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
ELX	50,000	L4TD/2.2	A8	441	148	2233	727	3500	70
Adventure	54,000	L4TD/2.2	A8	441	148	2233	727	3500	70
Ultimate	58,000	L4TD/2.2	A8	441	148	2233	727	3500	70
Ultimate Sport	60,000	L4TD/2.2	A8	441	148	2233	727	3500	70

SUZUKI									
3-year/100,000km www.suzuki.com.au									
JIMNY									
Pint-sized cult classic returns in fourth-gen guise. Live axes front and rear and retro styling means it will remain a favourite on the off-road scene.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
3-door Hardtop	28,490	L4/1.5	M5	130	75	1095	340	1300	40
3-door Hardtop	29,990	L4/1.5	A4	130	75	1110	325	1300	40

TOYOTA									
5-year/unlimited km www.toyota.com.au									
PRADO									
The all-new 250 Prado is here. It is porkier than the 150, has lower payloads, less fuel capacity, higher tow-rating, the 2.8TD donk carries over, and prices have jumped, so it's a curious mix. Will sell like crazy.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
GX	72,500	I4TD/2.8	A8	500	150	2495	605	3500	110
GXL	79,990	I4TD/2.8	A8	500	150	2535	615	3500	110
VX	87,400	I4TD/2.8	A8	500	150	2570	610	3500	110
Altitude	92,700	I4TD/2.8	A8	500	150	2520	660	3500	110
Kakadu	87,468	I4TD/2.8	A8	500	150	2595	605	3500	110

FORTUNER									
Toyota's HiLux-based seven-seat wagon competes with Ford Everest, Mitsubishi Pajero Sport and Isuzu MU-X. Smaller than a Prado but still a proper 4x4 wagon.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
GX	53,775	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2175	625	3100	80
GXL	58,895	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2185	615	3100	80
Crusade	66,755	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2190	610	3100	80

LAND CRUISER 300 SERIES									
It's out with the V8s and in with an all-new V6 diesel engine in the new 300 Series Land Cruiser. There are now six models in the range including the new GR Sport and Sahara ZX models.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	-TOWING	FUEL
GX	96,991	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2495	785	3500	110
GXL	108,791	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2580	700	3500	110
VX	120,991	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2630	650	3500	110
Sahara	138,191	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2630	650	3500	110
GR Sport	145,791	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2630	650	3500	110
Sahara ZX	144,791	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2610	670	3500	110

LAND CRUISER 70									
The 70 Series Cruiser has built a reputation as a load-hauler extraordinaire. Available as long-wheelbase Troopie or five-door, mid-wheelbase wagon.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
WorkMate Troopie	77,200	I4TD/2.8	M5	450	150	N/A	N/A	3500	130
GXL Troopie	80,500	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2360	1115	3500	130
WorkMate wagon	75,600	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2320	1190	3500	130
GXL Wagon	77,800	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2300	1210	3500	130

LAND CRUISER 70 CAB-CHASSIS									
Still the king of the country when it comes to a reliable workhorse. Safety updates and that steady 2.8TD with six-speed auto is a winning combo.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
WorkMate single c/c	76,800	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2145	1365	3500	130
GX single c/c	78,800	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2130	1380	3500	130
GXL single c/c	80,900	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2130	1380	3500	130

LAND CRUISER 79 DOUBLE CAB									
Tough-as-nails and with room for five, the LC79 dual-cab uses the 2.8TD engine backed by a smooth-shifting six-speed auto (for \$2k less, you can opt for a five-speed manual).									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
WorkMate dual c/c	77,300	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2205	1310	3500	130
GXL dual c/c	81,500	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2185	1325	3500	130

HILUX									
The N80 Hilux with a new 2.8-litre engine, six-speed transmissions and a beefed-up towing capacity. A facelift and more power for the 2021 model adds to its appeal.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
W'Mate Single c/c	40,965	I4TD/2.4	M6	400	110	1775	1225	3200	80

W'Mate Extra c/c	46,665	I4TD/2.4	A6	400	110	1890	1110	3000	80
W'Mate Dual c/c	48,735	I4TD/2.4	A6	400	110	1915	1085	3000	80
W'Mate Dual p/u	48,235	I4TD/2.4	M6	400	110	2045	955	3200	80
W'Mate Dual p/u	50,420	I4TD/2.4	A6	400	110	2045	955	3000	80
SR Single c/c	44,035	I4TD/2.8	M6	420	150	1795	1205	3500	80
SR Single c/c	44,590	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	1795	1205	3200	80
SR Extra c/c	48,695	I4TD/2.8	M6	420	150	1890	1110	3500	80
SR Extra c/c	48,250	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	1895	1155	3200	80
SR Dual c/c	48,510	I4TD/2.8	M6	420	150	1955	1045	3500	80
SR Dual c/c	50,660	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	1955	1045	3200	80
SR Dual p/u	52,455	I4TD/2.8	M6	420	150	2050	950	3500	80
SR Dual p/u	52,010	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2045	955	3200	80
SR5 Extra p/u	60,250	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2045	1005	3200	80
SR5 Dual p/u	60,676	I4TD/2.8	M6	420	150	2040	960	3500	80
SR5 Dual p/u	63,260	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2045	955	3200	80
Rogue Dual p/u	71,530	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2174	826	3200	80
Rugged X Dual p/u	69,990	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2252	748	3200	80
GR Sport	73,990	I4TD/2.8	A6	550	165	N/A	N/A	3500	80

VOLKSWAGEN									
5-year/unlimited km www.volkswagen.com.au									
AMAROK									
The second-gen Amarok shares much of its underpinnings with the next-gen Ford Ranger. Four engines are on offer in the line-up including the V6 shared with the Ford, as well as a 2.3-litre petrol.									
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
TDI405 Core	50,990	L4TD/2.0	M6	405	125	2185	1065	3500	80
TDI405 Core	52,990	L4TD/2.0	A6	405	125	2208	1042	3500	80
TDI500 Life 2.0	56,990	L4TD/2.0	A10	500	154	2242	988	3500	80
TDI500 Style	66,990	L4TD/2.0	A10	500	154	2271	1009	3500	80
TDI600 Style	70,990	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2319	1031	3500	80
TDI600 PanAm	75,990	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2319	1031	3500	80
TDI600 Aventura	79,990	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2332	858	3500	80
TSI452 Aventura	79,990	L4P/2.3	A8	452	222	2228	872	3500	80

PATROL POWERS ON

The Nissan Patrol reached a sales milestone, notching up its 250,000th Australian delivery since its local arrival in 1961 in 60 Series guise. The Patrol has evolved through multiple generations – MQ, the highly customisable GQ, the Y61 and the current Y62 – to become a beloved off-road vehicle for many Australians.

“Few models reach legend status, and even fewer are still cementing that legacy today, but that's exactly what the Patrol has achieved across each of its generations in Australia,” said Andrew Humberstone, vice president and managing director, Nissan Oceania.

Since the early days, the Patrol nameplate has strengthened with each generation. In 2024, Nissan posted a total of 8293 sales of its Patrol, which was a 6.2 per cent increase on 2023 where the brand shifted a total of 7812 units.

“What makes this milestone particularly meaningful is how Australia has shaped the Patrol. The best example of that is in Nissan showrooms now – the Patrol Warrior by Premcar. It's a Patrol that is second-stage engineered for Australians, in Australia.”

The Y62 Patrol is a far different vehicle to those early models but continues to sell well, out-selling its biggest rival, the Land Cruiser 300 Series for the last three months.

The new Y63 Patrol is expected in Australia in 2026.





A CASE OF THE SHINGLES



DEANE HUSSEY

> CANTERBURY, SOUTH ISLAND, NZ

On an off-road trip exploring the majestic Canterbury high country in New Zealand's South Island – a region well-known for its stunning plains, mountains and coastline – Deane Hussey found himself in a sticky situation amongst the area's dense river shingles.

"It always happens with the big heavy wagon, our river shingles are unforgiving," Deane told 4X4 Australia.

A self-recovery was in order for the 80 Series LandCruiser VX,

achievable in part to the vehicle's long list of aftermarket accessories and modifications. Its 1HD-T is running a full electronic transmission controlled by Compushift, and the vehicle is equipped with beadlocked 35x12.5 Mickey Thompson Baja Boss tyres; a GU Patrol front-diff conversion with flipped arms; an all GU steering set-up; e-lockers; a Superwinch at the front; and a Warn winch at the rear. Plus the Toyota has had protective exobar work fitted all around.

The recovery was a pretty

straightforward affair – doubled-up pulley pull from the front winch with long extensions – taking Deane less than half an hour.

"That was a quick recovery, less than half an hour," he said. "I always look for points to winch from before I enter something that I may get stuck in."

When asked what he would do differently next time, Deane laughed: "Nothing different next time, except maybe some more photos!" 📸

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